

W. H. Burdett

A
P I C T U R E
O F
E N G L A N D.

1

6

P
P
L
L
D
L
D
D
D
L
L
L
M
M
L
A

F

C

A
P I C T U R E ^c_f
O F
E N G L A N D :
CONTAINING A
DESCRIPTION OF THE LAWS, CUSTOMS,
AND
MANNERS OF ENGLAND.
INTERSPERSED WITH
CURIOUS AND INTERESTING ANECDOTES
O F T H E

Present K. of Denmark	General Smith	Mrs. Abington
Prince of Wales	Lord Camden	Mr. Wedgewood
Late E. M. Theresa	Lord Thurlow	Chevalier D'Eon
Louis XV.	Lord Kenyon	Lord Stormont
Duke de Choiseul	D. of Bridgewater	Mr. Villette
Late Duke of Bedford	Lord Chatham	General Gansell
Dutcheſs Dow. Bedford	Lord Sackville	Late Mr. Garrick
Duke Northumberland	General Burgoyne	Mr. Foote
Dutcheſs of Devonſhire	Mr. Luttrell	Mrs. Cornelys
Lord Bute	Mr. Wilkes, and	Mrs. Siddons
Lord North	ſeveral other Al-	Barry
Lord Mansfield	dermen	Woodward
Mr. Fox	Mr. Burke	Weston
Mr. Pitt	Mr. Horne Tooke	Henderſon
Lord Sandwich	Late Lord Clive	Palmer
Admiral Keppel	Mr. Gibbon	Mr. Kelly, &c. &c.

By M. D'ARCHENHOLZ,

Formerly a Captain in the Service of the King of Prussia.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

D U B L I N :

P. BYRNE, 108, GRAFTON-STREET.

1 7 9 1.

VK
903
ARC

Tx
A 6696 P

FEB 9 1928

C O N T E N T S.

CHAPTER I.

VIEW of Great Britain—Manner of thinking in England—Privileges and Liberty of the Nation—Courts of Justice—Duchess of Kingston—Colonel de la Motte—General Elections—Rights of the Sovereign—Outlines of the Character of Geo. III.—Ministerial Projects—Lord George Germaine—National Opinions of Equality, Honour, Dishonour, and unequal Matches—Mr. Luttrell—General Burgoyne—Saratoga

Page 1

CHAPTER II.

National Pride—Character—Anecdote concerning some German Emigrants—General Knowledge—Liberty of the Press—Newspapers—Letters of Junius—Mr. Horne Tooke—The Abuse of the Public Prints—Their Utility—History and Character of Mr. Wilkes—Alderman Croftby—His Imprisonment in the Tower—His Release and Triumph

30

CHAP.

CHAPTER III.

The Fertility of England—Its Climate, Productions, and Industry—Society of Arts—Duke of Bridgewater's Canal—Extraordinary Inventions—Wedgewood's Manufactures—Mrs. Abington—Beggars of Rank—Calas—Colonel Champigny—Societies of Rogues — 58

CHAPTER IV.

Extent of London—Contrast betwixt the City and the West End of the Town—Peculiarities in the Houses and Public Buildings—The Pavement—Assurance of Houses—Is London well lighted?—St. Paul's—Westminster Abbey—Anecdote of Charles I.—Adelphi—Mansion-House—Bridges—The Bank—City Magistrates—Patriotism of Mr. Beckford — — — 76

CHAPTER V.

The State of Religion in England—Toleration—The Catholics—The Clergy—The Puritans—The Methodists—Whitfield—Sunday—Anniversary of the Martyrdom of Charles I.—Quakers—Anabaptists—Deism—The Reverend Mr. Williams—Suicide—Hon. Mr. Damer—Lord Clive—The Jews—Doctor Falcon—The Philosopher's Stone—Linguet — 101

CHAPTER VI.

Public Spirit—National Characteristics—Hospitals—Gen. Wolfe—The Duke de Nivernois—Generosity of the English Ladies—Maria Theresa—Lord Tyrcannel—Lord Chatbam — — — 116

C O N T E N T S. in

CHAPTER VII.

Commerce of the English—The Peace of 1762—The Duke of Bedford—Duc de Choiseul—The Merchants—Sir George Calbrooke—Bank of England — 124

CHAPTER VIII.

Public Executions : Earl of Ferrers—Alderman Sayre—The celebrated Chevalier d'Eon—Mons. de Morande—Dr. Dodd—An Anecdote—Barbarous Punishment in Scotland—Singular Law with regard to Women—Prohibition against Swearing—Hunting of Animals—The Lord Chancellor—Free Masons—Strict Observation of the Letter of the Law — 132

CHAPTER IX.

The Facility of procuring Credit in England—Bailiffs—Singular Process on being arrested—Bail—Fleet and King's-Bench Prisons—Laws and Regulations—Debtors—Acts of Grace—The Military obliged to submit to the Civil Power—General Gansel — 160

CHAPTER X.

The Police of London—Highwaymen and Footpads—House-breakers—Anecdote—Thieves—Women of the Town—Seduction—Bagnios—Singular Excess—Unnatural Crimes held in great Abhorrence — 178

CHAPTER XI.

The manner of Living in England—Coffee-Houses—Lloyd's Assurance Offices—Domestick Customs—The Contrast between

between French and English Dinners—Coo'ry—Liquors—Dress—Singular Request to the King—Servants—Sunday—Good-nature of the People—Boxing—Marshal Saxe's Dispute with a Scavenger—The King of Bath.

199

CHAPTER XII.

Character of the English Ladies—Of the Nobility—Whimical Anecdotes—Hon. Mr. Montague—Lotteries—Insurance Offices—Belts—Sir Watkin W. Wynne—Lord Baltimore—May-day—Voyage to New Zealand—Otseite—Charles I.—Anecdote of a Spaniard—National Hatred—Aversion to Anatomical Operations—Mrs. Phillips—Ballads

216

CHAPTER XIII.

The Theatres—Italian Opera—Jubilee in honour of Shakspeare—Kelly the Poet—The Contrast betwixt the English and French Theatres—Foote—Garrick—George Alexander Stevens—Mrs. Cornelys—Pantheon—Masquerades. Debating Societies

234

CHAPTER XIV.

Reflections on the Finances—The English Liberty and Constitution—Marine—Pressing of Seamen—Greenwich Hospital—Sailors—Admiral Keppel—Army—Militia—East-India Company—Arts and Sciences—British Museum. Style of the English Gardens—Conclusion

253

A
P I C T U R E
O F
E N G L A N D.

C H A P T E R I.

View of Great Britain—Manner of thinking in England—Privileges and Liberty of the Nation—Courts of Justice—Duchess of Kingston—Colonel de la Mothe—General Elections—Rights of the Sovereign—Outlines of the character of George III.—Ministerial Projects—Lord George Germaine—National opinions of Equality, Honour, Dishonour, and unequal Matches—Mr. Luttrell—General Burgoyne—Saratoga.

THE island of Great Britain is so different from all the other states of Europe in the form of its government, its laws, its customs, its manners, and the mode of thinking and of acting adopted by its inhabitants, that it seems rather to belong to some other globe than that on which we live. The contrast is uncommonly striking when one passes directly from France to England. On that occasion

B

a stranger

a stranger imagines himself transported to another planet, the voyage is so short, and performed in such a small space of time.

No country in the world ought more to interest the philosophical observer than that kingdom, of which so much is said and so little understood. This indeed will be always the opinion of every impartial man, who has resided there sufficiently long to learn the language of the country, and acquire the knowledge necessary to form a proper opinion.

The uncommon revolution that has taken place in England within the two last centuries, in the manners, the sciences and the arts; in commerce, religion, and above all, in the political constitution, is worthy of exciting the greatest astonishment. Notwithstanding the ancient privileges which the nation acquired with great difficulty, and which even in barbarous times assumed the name of liberty, the government was still tyrannical. Of this the history of the reign of Henry VIII. and of the cruel Mary, his daughter, will furnish the most incontestible proofs. However, in more prosperous times, they passed rapidly from the extreme of oppression to the most unbridled liberty in both civil and religious affairs. It is out of the bosom of this independence that those characters arise whose originality so much surprises us. A rich Englishman, and in general every inhabitant of that fortunate island, knows no other restraint on his conduct, than the laws, and his own inclination.—If he does not infringe on the jurisprudence of his country, he is entirely master of his own actions. From thence proceed those numerous follies, and those extravagancies, at which the nations among whom they are unknown seem so much shocked, for want of being able to investigate the cause, which would make them rather astonished that they are not more numerous

numerous. *The opinion of the world*, so formidable in other countries, is there disregarded. Nobody consults any thing but his own judgment; and they all despise the sentiments of those from whom they have nothing either to hope or to fear.

There, as every where else, they laugh at a ridiculous person, but they treat him with a great deal of indulgence; and they do not esteem a gentleman less on account of his oddity, provided he hurts no one; for it is one of the particular features of an Englishman's character never to lose sight of the laws of his country. I shall hereafter shew, by means of the most remarkable examples, the influence this has on the national character.

The English have adopted in their literature this liberty, or rather this propriety of thinking and of acting; and it is to this that we are indebted for so many bold systems, so many spirited and useful truths, with which their philosophers and mathematicians have enriched human nature. From thence also proceed that daring flight of genius, and those new paths which their historians and their poets have opened, and with which they have as it were enlarged the world of ideas.

That country has so many attractions, that no stranger ever remains there any time without being attached to it by some secret charm: there are two things, however, first necessary; the one, that he should understand English: and the other, that he should have plenty of money, to enable him to live comfortably in a country where every thing is dear. He will then, whatever may be his taste, his age, or his manner of thinking, find every thing necessary to his satisfaction. This charm extends to all conditions, from the highest to the most wretched. During the residence of the present king of Denmark in France, all the arts were employed to amuse him: they made entertainments for him

hitherto unknown; they even illuminated the forests, to give him the pleasure of the chase by torch-light. Every witty expression which he said, or did not say, became at once the subject and the burthen of some new song. In one word, the nation strove on his account to metamorphose Paris into an Elisium. Nevertheless London, where he enjoyed none of these pleasures, where no one, not even a common sailor, gave the wall to him, appeared much more charming.

It is proved by more than one example, that those of the most distinguished rank are not always sorry to feel that they are but men. A powerful prince of the Empire, who was too conscious of his high birth to deign ever to forget it, happening to visit England, found the Britons treat him with less respect than he had experienced from his own subjects. He began at first to complain; but reflecting that it was only what he had a right to expect, he ended by joking at the circumstance; and although he had not afterwards any more occasion to be pleased with the attentions of the court than with the politeness of the people, this did not prevent him from still thinking that his stay was agreeable.

The English themselves know so well how to appreciate the blessings enjoyed in their native country, that those malefactors who conceive the slightest hope of escaping from punishment, rather choose to be exposed to the perils attendant on a criminal process than to expatriate themselves. Exile is, in their eyes, a species of death, little less dreadful than a violent end; for one always sees, at their public executions, wretches who might have easily escaped by flight.

Notwithstanding that this country differs in so many respects from all others, and, according to the opinion of Montesquieu, is blessed with a more perfect government than any other; yet it so happens that

that its excellence is little known, nay, is often abused, even by those who pass for philosophers. From hence proceed those foolish doubts concerning the preference of an absolute monarchy, or a limited one like that of Great-Britain. I envy not any man those chains which he glories in; by comparison they may appear light, and even honourable; but he must surely not only be unjust, but even mad, who wishes, by means of sophistry, to raise the condition of the subject of a monarchy above that of an Englishman.

Whoever will take the trouble to read the astonishing actions, recounted in this work, when I treat of the constitution, the laws, and the general welfare, will then perhaps cease to think the following speech of the Nabob of Arcot hyperbolical, on introducing colonel Smith to the victorious Soubah or the Decan: "Great prince! receive my present: it is a warrior with whom I give you the friendship of the English, who are a nation of kings!"

A German philosopher, of whom I shall hereafter make mention, gives this excellent definition of political liberty: "I call that state free," says he, "where there is no greater restraint on human actions, than what is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the commonwealth; a state where nothing is regulated with partiality, but by general acquiescence, and with the full view of augmenting the general good; a state which, in the privileges of any individual or any condition, has no respect but for the most distinguished merit; a state, in one word, *where the greatest powers can at once display themselves, and act in concert.*" I shall prove, by incontestible facts, that all this is more peculiar to England than any other country.

Notwithstanding the intestine dissensions inevitable in a republic, and which even appear necessary to its preservation, since furnishing food to the democratical spirit, they keep the state in health by giving it life and activity; notwithstanding the unhappy issue of the American war; notwithstanding the enormous debt and devouring luxury of the nation; in fine, notwithstanding all the vices and imperfections which are the unhappy lot of human nature; the people of England still possess a felicity worthy to be envied, and of which perhaps other nations can scarce have a conception: so difficult it is, in living under the mildest yoke, to form just ideas of a national liberty grounded on the rights of humanity.

Nothing ever appeared more jocular to the English than that passage in the manifesto of France, published at the beginning of the last war, where, it is said, "that the most christian king found himself under the necessity of protecting the Americans, whose *liberty and privileges had been attacked*." In their answer, the ministry did not testify a small share of astonishment, that they should make use of expressions in France which could not in that kingdom be understood.

It is a truth which will not admit of doubt, that no polished nation was ever so free as the English are at this day; and those who are acquainted with the constitution of ancient and modern kingdoms will not hesitate to subscribe to this opinion. We cannot but pardon his patriotism, when a Dutchman or a Swiss flatters himself with possessing as much liberty as an Englishman. A succinct account of British Liberty, by affording a comparison, will render my argument apparent.

Without mentioning the great number of franchises and immunities of every kind, which the great charter and many favourable revolutions have at different

different times procured to the nation, we may arrange the rights of the people under six classes, viz.

The Liberty of the Press,
 The Habeas Corpus Act,
 Public Courts of Justice,
 The Trial by Jury,
 The Right of being represented in Parliament.
 The Privileges of Public remonstrances,

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

It is with great reason that the English boast of the liberty of the press, and regard it as the *palladium* or safe-guard of their civil liberty. It is true that it is often abused by the publication of foolish pasquinades, and shameful libels; but this inconvenience is amply indemnified by the immense advantages produced from it.*

The most hardened servant of the crown, who in the cabinet and in parliament blushes not to propose the most pernicious plans, and who knows how to endure with the utmost coolness the most outrageous contradictions and reproaches, is stopped in the midst of his audacious enterprises by the public voice. Hitherto no English minister has dared to forget or despise this voice. It is this which often renders his bad designs abortive, and destroys his best concerted projects.

The liberty of the press is also favourable to those popular assemblies so necessary in a free state; for the newspapers inform the public of the time, the place, and generally the object of those meetings, which they detail in a particular manner to the whole nation. In them every one enjoys the most entire

B 4

liberty

* I must say, to the honour of our country, that, except England, there is no other kingdom in the world where an honest man may write so many bold truths, and discover so many abuses, as in Germany.

liberty of speech ; the members of parliament themselves, who often go to them, sometimes find matters better discussed there than in either house of parliament. The statesman whose measures have been disapproved, and the minister who has been dismissed, there find a free access ; there they employ their friends and their credit, and bring all the arts they are masters of into play to gain the people to their interests.

Without the liberty of the press, it would have been impossible for a state in which the king is the disposer of all the offices, dignities, and in a manner of all the riches of the country, to have maintained its independence so long. The most insignificant attempt of a minister, which in its remotest consequence gives an appearance of a design on the national liberty, immediately sets the nation in movement ; the people become clamorous ; the minister trembles, and the project is abandoned. If the public were less attentive to trifles, the crown would soon extend its prerogative, and at last insensibly arrive at the end which it aims at—absolute power.

HABEAS CORPUS ACT.

This shelters the lowest subject in the state from oppression. By means of this, neither the minister, nor even the king himself, can keep any Englishman in prison if the cause of his detention is not assigned in a few days ; it also provides that he shall be produced before some public tribunal, face to face with his accuser. By its means one of the lowest of the people is perfectly secure against the greatest grandee in the state, although he may be aided by the sovereign authority. Can there be a greater contrast, than betwixt this act and the famous *lettres de cachet* ; of which the ministers of France were hitherto so prodigal ? It was sufficient to have offended the under clerk of some statesman, to have been sent to the Bastille and buried alive. If we may believe
Linguet,

Linguet, this infernal custom is still in vogue. This singular man, during his first visit to England, tortured his genius to abuse in his Annals the liberty enjoyed by the English. Now better instructed in the school of the Bastile, he thinks differently, and regards England as the most sacred asylum. He publicly deploras his foolish patriotism, and assures us in this Journal that his cure is radical.

By means of the history of Wilkes, in part forgotten, and in part unknown in Germany, I shall hereafter shew the great advantages of the act in question.

PUBLIC COURTS OF JUSTICE.

These are a necessary appendage to a free state. In ancient Greece and Rome, all suits and processes were discussed and determined in public. In such a situation it is difficult to be evidently unjust, when the auditory consists of a whole people, who observe the slightest action, and censure the least improper word. There never was any judge but the decemvir Appius, so audacious as to bully a whole nation, and become guilty of an open injustice.

During the process against the duchess of Kingston in 1777, a circumstance occurred which clearly demonstrates the excellence of a public trial. This lady being the wife of a peer of the realm, was consequently tried before the house of Lords. All the peers of England were her judges, under the direction of a lord high steward, named for that purpose by the king, his dignity ending with the trial. The theatre of this august scene was Westminster-hall, whose spacious inclosure was not sufficient for the crowd of spectators. The principal evidence on the side of the duchess was a bed-ridden old man, whom it was impossible to carry out of his chamber. However, the deposition of this man was so favourable to the duchess, that it was indispensably necessary towards the gaining of her cause. What was to

be done? She demanded of her judges, that they would please to appoint a judicial deputation to receive his testimony at his own house. This was indeed a favour uncommon in England: it appeared, however, so equitable to a number of the peers, that they were about to make a decree for that purpose.

The earl of Mansfield, lord chief justice of England, a man, who to the eloquence of Cicero unites the most profound knowledge of the laws of his country, seeing the intention of the house, rose from his seat. After having informed them that it was his wish to allow to the accused all proper means of justification, he painted in the most lively colours the prejudicial consequences of such an illegal favour; he observed that a precedent like this, the authority of which is always so powerful in the English courts of law, would induce and even oblige them to consent to similar demands; that, in all processes of great importance, there are sick witnesses who wish to be privately examined; and would it not be easy, added he, to deceive or seduce a small number of men entrusted with such a commission, even perhaps to procure the election to fall on a chosen few? He ended by saying, that this innovation would open the door to venality and seduction; that it would give a mortal stroke to the national liberty; that it would endanger the right of property, so sacred in this island, and even the lives of their fellow citizens.

To comprehend the force of this reasoning it is necessary to observe, that in all the English courts of justice the sentence almost entirely depends on the deposition of witnesses, and that the oral testimony of one single evidence is of more avail than a thousand documents. The speech of lord Mansfield made the most lively impression on his audience. Those of the peers who were the most zealous friends of the duchess immediately desisted from
their

their demand, and her eloquent defenders became silent. Was not this an interesting scene to a philosophical observer?

TRIAL BY JURY.

Twelve sworn citizens, whom they call a jury, give judgment in all the courts of justice. They actually acquit or condemn. It is true, they are assisted by one or more judges, whose business it is to hear the witnesses, take care of the legality of the procedure, sum up the evidence, and pronounce the sentence according to the tenor of the law. Besides this, to prevent the inconvenience that must naturally arise from the pretended criminal's being dragged before a court of justice on slight suspicions, every accusation is first examined by a grand jury, whose decision either annihilates or continues the process. The petty juries, who give a final sentence, must be unanimous, and are shut up in a chamber until they bring in their verdict: on the other hand, the proceedings of the grand jury are regulated by a plurality of voices. If one of the twelve jurymen dies, after the arraignment and before the conviction of the supposed criminal, he is immediately released; because no person can be tried twice for the same offence.

The great impartiality of the English courts of justice is interwoven with the very constitution of the government. Never has the most powerful minister, however great his authority, or however profligate his conduct, attempted to bid defiance to the laws. Whatever may be his power, and however numerous his adherents, if he but attempt to oppress the least of his fellow citizens, a process will immediately issue against him, and he will be obliged to appear before the judges in person. Whoever knows the value of such an inestimable privilege, will not fail to admire the administration of justice in England, which can never indeed be imitated but in a state equally free.

Every

Every inhabitant house-keeper, at the end of two years, is obliged to undertake in his turn certain parochial employments gratis, and is also to serve on juries. Foreigners, although they have not been naturalized, are likewise liable to these offices as well as the natives. The twelve necessary for the determination of any process, are chosen out of a very large number; which renders intrigues impossible; and indeed there has been no example of an attempt of this kind. By these means, the trials, are at once quick and impartial. Linguet himself, who before he smarted for his patriotism, had undertaken the task of reviling every thing in England, was forced against his own inclination to pay to these juridical customs the tribute of his admiration. In a criminal trial, if the accused be a foreigner, the jury is composed of six English and six foreigners, whose names are communicated to him before hand, to the end that he may be enabled to reject, without explaining his reasons, any of them whom he suspects to be his enemies.

Nothing is more astonishing than the mildness and humanity with which criminals are here treated, whether they be thieves, murderers, or incendiaries. Even if their guilt is evident, the bar, the jury, and the judges, all seem to conspire for their acquittal. They search the indictment for some trifling fault that may render it equivocal; a false surname, an indeterminate date, a single letter omitted; all these are fatal to the process, and will immediately put an end to it. The counsel defend the culprit with zeal, and the witnesses against him are questioned with much strictness, and sometimes with much severity. His own confession is never demanded, and he can be convicted by the evidence of credible witnesses alone. It is repugnant to human nature to see a man bear testimony against himself; and this philosophical maxim affords a strange contrast to the practice of those tribunals of which torture is the grand

grand resource. When all the evidence is ended, it is permitted the accused to make his defence; and the greatest attention is paid to every thing he says. If he is found guilty, a judge announces to him the punishment which the law inflicts on his offence, in a speech which, so far from being composed of reproachful and reviling words, is generally filled with tender and compassionate expressions.

Colonel de la Mothe, the French spy executed at London in 1782, who in his own country had been considered as a despicable wretch, was not a little surprised at the indulgence he experienced here. They sent to him while in prison the heads of the accusation, that he might have time to prepare an answer. The most celebrated advocates undertook his defence without any fee. He received a list of the jury who were to try him; and, in a word, he was treated in such a manner as if the public welfare was interested in his preservation. The presiding judge, after having with great mildness stated the care which the laws had shewn to his situation, ended with these words: "It is thus, sir, that you have been used in a country, where you had no right to expect the least favour: but such are the customs of a people whose dearest interests you have attempted to invade." Are not such examples sufficient to destroy those vulgar prejudices, by which we are taught to believe that the manners of the English are barbarous? This is not the act of a few individuals, but of a nation, displayed in its constitution, its manners, its usages, and its law. Whoever searches into facts, and examines them with attention, must perceive the superiority of the laws of England.

THE RIGHT OF BEING REPRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT.

Every freeholder, possessed of the annual rent of forty shillings per annum, has a right to vote at the election

election of the members of parliament for his own county. This right, however, is not always founded on the same claim, in the cities and boroughs. In some of them, every proprietor of a house has a vote; in others, only the members of the corporation. Some are allowed to name representatives without possessing any land at all. The two universities of Oxford and Cambridge possess this privilege, merely from the respect that the nation pays to learning and the sciences.

The means of corruption give the court great influence at general elections: however, the last king could not prevent the patriotic party from making the most efficacious laws against this shameful abuse, which is still continued with impunity. For example, the candidate goes among the electors, buys all kinds of trifles, and pays for them very dearly; for instance, five guineas have been given for a whistle, a fowl, &c. &c. The shop keepers know what this signifies, pocket the money and give their votes in return. As this is entirely a matter of speculation, it often happens that the candidate wastes prodigious sums in vain, when the influence of his rival happens to be greater than his own. Fordyce, the famous banker, expended 30,000*l.* in an attempt of this kind; and then, imagining that injustice had been done him, had the folly to embark in a process equally expensive, in consequence of which many hundreds of the inhabitants were sent to London to appear as evidence. This second attempt, however, had the same fate as the first, and did not a little contribute to his total ruin. The regard in which a member of parliament is held there, and his influence on public affairs, more especially if he possesses eloquence—that eloquence which leads to the first offices of the state—have such powerful attractions to an Englishman, that they induce him to make
astonishing

astonishing efforts to obtain a place in the senate of his country. One of the principal reasons of modern venality proceeds from the great number of nabobs, who on their return from India, attempt at any price to purchase a seat in parliament; and this is also the cause of the impunity which they experience, for the enormous crimes committed in that part of the world.

There cannot be a more astonishing contrast between any two civilized nations, than with respect to Italy and England. The Italians celebrate almost every day in the year a religious holiday; the English, a political festival. The latter is as little known in Italy, as the former in England. Nothing is more common in that island than meetings, processions, and other testimonies of public joy, which interest in a very lively manner all those who are acquainted with the reasons of them; but the finest and most extraordinary of all is, without contradiction, a general election. One may then behold the same scenes which were exhibited in ancient Rome, when the people chose their new magistrates. Those of the very first rank, who by their wealth and their talents deserve to be reckoned among the chief persons in the state, go about soliciting the meanest of the people for their votes.—The handsome duchess of Devonshire herself was not ashamed to entreat the lowest shopkeepers in Westminster, in behalf of Mr. Fox. That charming lady's motive was not to oblige this unquiet and turbulent statesman, but to please the Prince of Wales, who interested himself in his election.

The appointed day being arrived, all the electors assemble in bodies, and range themselves under their respective colours. The candidates walk in procession accompanied by a crowd of their friends and the different parties are distinguished from each other by the ribbands worn in their hats. Before
each

each are carried colours, on which the name of the candidate and his device are painted. These processions, consisting of some thousands of men, and which, in London in particular, have always a hundred thousand spectators, are made without the assistance of armed soldiers, or the officers of justice, the presence of whom is regarded as indispensable in other countries, who for the most part, do more ill than good.

The candidates having ascended a kind of amphitheatre, covered with tapestry, and erected on purpose, harangue the people as the Roman orators did formerly in the forum. After this the names of the electors are registered without distinction of rank or age, and a majority of their votes determines the election of him who, by his new dignity, is empowered to watch over the interests and safety of the state, and to enact or annul the laws of his country. On these occasions, however great the tumult may be among a people who enjoy so much liberty, there very seldom happens any serious affray, so much difference is there between a people accustomed to abandon themselves entirely, and without fear, to the impulse of their own breasts, and those unfortunate men, who bending under the yoke of a frightful despotism, fall into the most guilty excess the moment that they perceive their chains either broken or relaxed. One neither perceives the glittering of swords or of pistols in the political lists of the English, however great the animosity of the combatants.

The choice being made, the victorious candidate is brought to his own house in triumph. On his election Mr. Fox, in allusion to his support from the fair sex, dedicated a banner to them with this motto, "*Sacred to female patriotism.*"

I myself was present, and never beheld a spectacle which affected me so much, or which, in my opinion

opinion, was capable of conveying to the human mind such a noble degree of energy. A celebrated French author, who was also there, observes, " My
" satisfaction was complete, when I recollected
" that this universal homage was paid to a simple
" individual, without dignities and without power,
" supported only by his own courage, his own zeal,
" and the attachment of his friends; that the same
" man, the object of this cavalcade and of these
" honours, thus recompenced for his services to the
" people, and his opposition to the ministers of the
" crown, would, in every other country, have
" groaned under persecutions; that he would, per-
" haps, have terminated his life in a dungeon; that
" in place of this pomp, which seemed to elevate
" him above mortality, an arbitrary order would
" have precipitated him, with the greatest ignomi-
" ny, into the abysses of a Bastile or a Spandau, or
" exiled him into the deserts of Siberia. What a
" lesson! How truly does it justify the pride of
" Englishmen! How well does it excuse that pre-
" ference which so many great men have even in-
" voluntarily given to their constitution above all
" others!"

It is a certain fact, that those elections greatly augment the haughtiness of the English, and inspire them with high ideas of equality. I was witness, at a contest for the town of Newcastle, to a very singular circumstance. Two candidates had offered themselves for this place: the one was the friend and relation of the late duke of Northumberland, who went there on purpose to assist him, and engage the people in his interests; the other was patronized by a merchant of London, of the name of Smith, who had acquired a fortune of 100,000*l.* in the coal trade, and had a considerable interest among the inhabitants. The duke of Northumberland, who besides the advantages of his rank and fortune, had

also occupied some of the most distinguished situations in the state, did not imagine that such a man could oppose him with any probability of success. However, on his arrival at Newcastle he was soon convinced of his mistake. In consequence of this he sent for Mr. Smith, who observed that he had no business with the duke, and that his grace must wait upon him. The duke actually complied and said, that if he would allow his relation to represent the borough, his friend should be returned a town in the neighbourhood that was entirely at his own disposal. Smith upon this roughly refused his grace's proposition, saying, "I have promised my friend that he shall represent this place, and no other, and I am not in the habit of breaking my word." "Very well," replied the duke, "it only remains that we should try our strength," and immediately departed. In fine each used his utmost efforts; but the coal-merchant's candidate was elected, in spite of all the interest of the Lord Lieutenant of the county, whose little credit became the subject of ridicule.

In regard to parliament, the great abuse consists in the inequality of the representation of the people in the House of Commons. Venality exists but in a small degree in the great cities, and is but of little consequence. What man is able to corrupt an almost innumerable crowd, who live at their ease, who are as rich, and oftentimes more so, than the candidates who solicit them? It was a project truly patriotic, and well worthy of the son of the great William Pitt, to attempt a reformation in regard to the little borough. Is it not the height of folly to behold towns which have 40,000 inhabitants, and sometimes even more, without a single member, while a few miserable hamlets have a representation equal to the most considerable cities? London, which ought to send forty members, sends only four, Manchester,

Manchester, Birmingham, and a great number of other places, whose manufactures and commerce render England so flourishing, send not even one. This scheme of Mr. Pitt, which tended to support the political constitution of his country, then on the brink of ruin, was evidently dictated by the greatest propriety. Lord North, and his colleagues, however opposed him: for corruption would have been annihilated, and all their power had this fatal system for its basis. As long as the sovereign does not seek to extend the privileges of the crown so as to infringe on the constitution, this reformation can never do him any hurt. During the glorious administration of the immortal Chatham he never had recourse to ministerial authority or the tricks of office; he scorned the arts of influence and corruption.

PRIVILEGE OF PUBLIC REMONSTRANCES.

In the year 1775, the king wished that a criminal condemned to death should not suffer at Tyburn, but be executed out of town, and before the very house where he had committed the burglary. His majesty's desire was notified accordingly by the secretary of state to the sheriffs of the county of Middlesex. In all other countries, they would have regarded with mere indifference the place where the culprit was to have been executed; but they think differently in England. The sheriffs refused to obey. An order drawn up with more precision had not a better effect; on the contrary, they presented an humble remonstrance to the king, wherein they gave the most solid reasons for their disobedience. They said, among other things, that if the place of punishment was changed at pleasure, this would by and by, produce an abuse which would sap the fundamental laws of the realm. These executions might be made, sometimes in town, sometimes in the country;

try ; in a public place, in this or that street, and at last even in a house ; from whence it would happen, that they might soon cease to be public, a circumstance so necessary in a free country. The sheriffs accordingly persisted in their refusal, and their conduct well deserved the thanks of the whole nation.

They are deceived who imagine that the situation of a king of England is disagreeable ; on the contrary, if it were ever possible that a crown could confer happiness on the wearer, a sovereign of England, *if he so inclines*, may enjoy this advantage in a peculiar manner. He possesses great and extraordinary privileges ; indeed, the chief magistrate of no free people, either ancient or modern, ever had such extensive rights. Without appealing to remote times let us only mention the stadtholders of Holland, the predecessors of the present king of Sweden, and the sovereigns of Poland ; with these let us compare an English monarch, and we shall immediately perceive the difference.

He is empowered, without consulting his parliament, to contract alliances, to declare war, and to make peace ; to receive and appoint ambassadors and ministers, and to enlist troops : he can assemble parliament when he pleases, prorogue it, appoint the place for it to meet in, and even dissolve it entirely. All new laws must have his sanction ; if they have been acceded to by both the other branches of the legislature, the refusal of his consent immediately annihilates them ; nor is it necessary that he should assign any reason for his conduct. He possesses the exclusive privilege of appointing the officers by sea and land ; the magistrates, the ministers, the judges of the crown ; the archbishops, bishops and other ecclesiastics ; he can enoble ;

grant

grant a pardon to criminals; found universities, colleges, hospitals and establish, fairs: he has the sole privilege of issuing proclamations; he is the guardian of all the fools in the kingdom, and he inherits the estate of all those who die without heirs. All the wrecks of which the owners are unknown belong to him, as well as the land left by the receding of the ocean. He can enact ecclesiastical laws, establish ceremonies for the church, convoke provincial and national synods, &c. When a king of England is contented with the peaceable enjoyment of these eminent advantages, without trenching on those of the nation, he may entirely confide in the administration of his ministers, who are answerable for every thing. "*That the king can do no wrong,*" is a maxim among the English ministers.

As the attacks upon them are almost always accompanied with the most poignant personalities, it is evident that a great portion of phlegm is in this country one of the greatest virtues in a minister. Lord North possessed this in an eminent degree. During his long administration he seems to have adopted the principle of the duke of Orleans, regent of France: "Let them speak as long as they allow us to act." It is asserted, a party in opposition to the court is absolutely necessary in the English parliament: this is what made the celebrated Sir Robert Walpole affirm, "That if such a party had not been already formed, he would have raised one with the public money."

The least personal offence offered to the king, is high treason. He himself is so little bound down in the exercise of his prerogative, that, without consulting any one, he can appoint a common sailor to be lord high admiral of England, and translate a country curate to the see of Canterbury. But if the power of the sovereign is unbounded in doing good, on the other hand it is strictly limited as to evil

evil. He dares not, without infringing the laws, command one of his postillions to be chastised. Neither can he tack conditions to the favours which he grants; nor add to the quantum of punishment which he orders to be inflicted.

This line of demarcation is without doubt the ground-work of the constitution. The sovereign, having the executive power in his own hands, can apply to the management of public affairs both celerity and dispatch, and exhibit a salutary uniformity in the exercise of the laws. When we compare with this the slowness and prolixity with which other free states manage their affairs, we shall perceive the numerous advantages resulting from such a constitution.

At no period since the Revolution, have so many and such successful attempts been made in favour of the prerogative as during the present reign. From the commencement of lord North's administration, till his dismissal in 1782, the parliament was entirely governed by the crown, and every proposition of the minister confirmed by a decided majority. Such a constant acquiescence on the part the Commons, and that too at a time, when the people were discontented, is a circumstance unexampled in their history. The character of the sovereign was the sole cause of all this. It is also probable, that it was a trait of this singular character which seldom occurs in a subject, and still less frequently on a throne, that gave to lord Bute such an ascendancy over him. This nobleman, who at the beginning of the present reign was placed at the head of affairs, is perhaps, the sole cause of all the misfortunes which have happened to England for these last twenty years.

Without being either generous or attached to wealth, the king has nevertheless a decided aversion to luxury. No sovereign in Europe is so badly lodged, keeps

keeps so poor a table, or sacrifices so little to his pleasures. The economy of the court is such, that I myself was present at a ball at St. James's, when the apartments were lighted with tallow candles, which for a long time have been banished from all the genteel houses in London.

With a revenue of 900,000*l.* sterling per annum, which belongs to the civil list, to which may be added 300,000*l.* arising from his foreign dominions, and other contingencies, one may be tempted to imagine that the king possesses immense treasures*, notwithstanding he seems, from time to time, so overwhelmed with debts, which the parliament is obliged to pay. Behold then that enigma explained, without which it would have been necessary to have added a commentary.

Lord North adopted the plan of the earl of Bute, and, during eleven years of a shameful administration, precipitated his country, from the flourishing state in which he found it, into the unhappy condition in which it still languishes. This statesman is not eminent for his eloquence, and far less for the greatness of his designs; but he excels in little artifices, and talents peculiarly calculated for intrigue. By means of these he at last governed the parliament and realized his own projects of ambition. He was seconded in all his schemes by the other ministers, who were in every point of view worthy of their chief. Who has not heard of a Germaine, branded and dishonoured by a council of war, a Sandwich, a Rigby, and many others, whose real characters the king alone seemed to be unacquainted with? A writer of some celebrity has attempted to investigate the reasons, and has narrated a number of singular anecdotes to explain the cause of the reciprocal

* Certain circumstances have occurred since the publication of the original, which fully confirm the conjectures of M. Archenholz.

reciprocal aversion that now exists between the king and lord North. It is, however, unnecessary to search for the secret and extraordinary reasons of an enmity, of which the motives are so perceptible.

The king for a long time imagined that he at last possessed in his lordship a minister who was attached to his interests? and he could not be persuaded to the contrary, so long as his lordship was at the head of affairs: he was, however, scarcely dismissed, when his majesty received the most convincing proofs of his venal administration. The esteem which the sovereign had till that moment entertained for him, immediately changed to contempt; and this change was the more insupportable to the minister, as he had received hopes that he might one day be again admitted into power. On this he immediately threw off his disguise, and showed himself as it were for the first time, in his own proper form.

The idea of liberty, and the consciousness of protection from the laws, are the reasons why the people in general testify but little respect for their superiors, and even for those in the highest offices, unless they have acquired their affections by affable and popular manners. That perfect equality, with which nature has formed mankind, is apparent in all the words and actions of these islanders; neither dignities nor riches are able to efface it. The very majesty of the throne is not always sufficiently respected. The English consider the sovereign as only the first magistrate in their service.

The nobility, who in all other countries claim respect and submission from their inferiors, dare not form such pretensions there. The spirit of liberty, which that class of men suck in with their very milk, teaches them to regard all the privileges of their fellow subjects as sacred.

No minister (notwithstanding the very caprices of such men often decide in other countries the fate

of a whole nation) no grandee of the kingdom will pretend to make any of the populace give way to him in the street; and, notwithstanding this, they every day walk through the most crowded part of the metropolis, where they find themselves splashed, squeezed, and elbowed, without having the least wish to complain. The vainest Englishman will converse freely with the lowest of his fellow citizens; he will take part in their diversions; and as in England they do not measure the difference of conditions by our scale, it is not at all unusual to see two persons quarrelling, between whose situations in life there is the greatest disparity.

It is true that those of the first rank in the state have occasion for the good offices of the lowest of its members, to enable them to realize their ambitious hopes; and it is not at all rare, at the election of members of parliament, to see the poorest citizens receive letters from the most illustrious candidates, in which their votes are requested with the utmost obsequiousness; and when they have yielded to these solicitations, they are always sure of receiving others expressive of thanks. Have we not lately beheld the duchess of Devonshire bestowing her gold and her kisses for this purpose? that very duchess, of whom the celebrated Angelica Kauffman has said, that she looks so like one of the Graces, as to realize in her own person all the ideas of the most fervid imagination.

This affectation of popularity, which so much astonishes strangers, proceeds from the very nature of the constitution of a free state. The Greeks and the Romans experienced the same while their republics subsisted. Does it not proceed from this, that the nobility of England are the most intelligent in Europe? They converse familiarly with men of learning and artists, and recompense their labours in the most generous manner. But that which renders

ders them the most worthy of praise, is the noble manner in which they support their disgrace at court : on these occasions the zeal and attachment of their friends, instead of being diminished, seems to be redoubled ; and so far from losing them with the favour of the sovereign, they testify greater esteem and attachment than before. It was thus that lord Chatham, who was obliged to resign when the present king mounted the throne, was almost idolized by the people, who esteemed and loved him before he lost his place. His portrait was placed in every house, as a kind of tutelary divinity ; the streets, the taverns, the coffee-houses, and the tea-gardens were called after his name, and the eye of every passenger was struck with inscriptions in honour of this great benefactor to the nation.

The English in general form a quite different idea of honour and infamy from other Europeans. A man who is arrested and imprisoned does not experience any insult on that account, nor is the family of a criminal who has been put to death, ever rendered infamous. The last duke of Lancaster but one, espoused the daughter of an ostler ; she survived him for some years with the title of duchess dowager. The honour of the duke was not impeached on this account, and the duchess continued to frequent court like any other lady of quality. A man of distinction retorts one insult by another, and pardons it without either being revenged, or fighting with the person who insults him. The late duke of Bedford, after having occupied the first situation in the state, was unmercifully horse-whipped at a horse-race*. Nevertheless, this did not prevent

*George the II. was but imperfectly acquainted with the English language. Having received a letter from admiral Sir Edward Hawke, after his celebrated victory over the French fleet, in which he informed his majesty, in the blunt but expressive language of a British tar, that he had given the enemy a " DRUBBING ; " the king requested of lord Ches-

vent him in 1762 from being appointed ambassador extraordinary to the court of France, where he signed the famous peace of Versailles. The populace among us, who possess a very different idea of honour, would not scruple to assert that this manner of thinking proceeds from a want of delicacy, and a prevalence of rude and savage manners. The philosopher, on the contrary, who is able to discover among the English a high degree of this very delicacy, who finds it carried even to the highest pitch of perfection, and who discovers no tincture of rudeness in the manners of this enlightened people—the philosopher, I say, will, like them, view the laws of honour in a different light.

Every subject in a monarchy trembles on account of the most trifling circumstance. The most indifferent action, a single word, sometimes even a supposition, are sufficient to deprive the miserable wretch of his subsistence; nay, it often costs him his fortune, sometimes his life. Upon the least of these events the welfare and existence of a family depend: they, therefore, affect an uncommon refinement in manners; and from thence it appears, that the most ridiculous prejudices often regulate the laws of that phantom to which they give the name of honour.

But in a republic, where these ideas lose a great deal of their force, where the citizen is ignorant of a thousand considerations of which the subject of a monarchy never dares to lose sight;—in a republic this is entirely different. It is to the Greeks and the Romans that I shall appeal: at a time when their civilization was at the highest degree of perfection, they thought exactly on that subject as the people of England do at the present day.

C 2

The

terfield that he would explain the word. The witty earl, to this question, pointing to the duke of Bedford, whose enemy he was, gravely assured his majesty, that no man in the kingdom could better satisfy his curiosity in regard to that article than his grace.

The English look on hypocrisy as the most despicable of all vices; and from this proceeds that boldness of speech, which, if not softened a little by the choice of expressions, would pass for rudeness. It is to their excellent constitution that they owe a frankness of character which is at once so rare and so inestimable, and which, among them, is generally accompanied with an unshaken courage and a determined resolution. It is not uncommon to hear expressions both in their courts of justice and in parliament, for which one would be tempted to imagine that the party attacked could never be revenged but by the blood of his adversary: these circumstances, however, are seldom attended with unhappy consequences. How, indeed, could the parliament of England exist without this? The stranger who thinks that such sallies are blameable, has surely never reflected on the nature of a free senate, where the useful must necessarily be preferred to the agreeable; where they do not meet to hear cold and formal speeches dictated by custom; and where it is impossible for the true patriot, whose soul is filled with the importance of the subject, to moderate his eloquence, and confine himself within the uneasy shackles of a servile complaisance.

One of the most violent of these parliamentary orators is captain Luttrell, a younger brother of the duchess of Cumberland. This forgetfulness of all the laws of politeness was so common to him, that, in a speech in the year 1777, he concluded by wishing, that all kinds of barbarous and cruel tortures, which are the disgrace of nations where they are still practised, might be introduced into England, because lord North could not then escape the wheel; and it would be, added he, "a real pleasure for me to see his bones broken by the hands of the executioner." Lord North, who was present, rose with his usual coolness, and contented himself by saying,
with

with a sigh, "that he had better seize the present opportunity of speaking, before he should be put to the rack."

This same Mr. Luttrell, the very next year, was engaged in a new quarrel with lord George Germaine. This nobleman, who after the battle of Minden had been dishonoured by the sentence of a court-martial, knew so well how to procure again the favour of the then government, that, unhappily for this country, he was appointed to a place in the ministry, and formed that ridiculous plan of operations for general Burgoyne, which occasioned the loss of all his army at Saratoga. Luttrell reproached him in full parliament with having been declared infamous; asserted that he had behaved, during the German war, with all the cowardice of a woman; and accompanied these reproaches with so many acrimonious reflections, that at last old Germaine lost all patience; however, amidst all the transports of his rage, he contented himself with calling him a *buffoon*. His opponent's behaviour, however, was so contrary to the rules of the house, that it occasioned a great disturbance. Luttrell, who foresaw the consequence, left his seat, and mingled with the crowd in the gallery, from whence he could hear what passed below. The speaker besought the members to help him to appease the tumult. Germaine acquiesces, but his adversary is gone. His absence augments the noise, until at last he is discovered. He is then ordered to descend;—he obeys, but refuses to make any apology to lord George Germaine. At this refusal, obstinately persisted in on his part, a member of parliament gives it as his opinion, that he ought to be sent to the Tower if he does not comply; but as it is impossible to put such a motion to the vote, without being seconded, and as no one was at this moment disposed to do so, Luttrell himself exclaims, "*I second the*

"*motion*." On this mutual excuses took place, and every thing remained quiet.

It is not at all uncommon to see two persons, who have been abusing each other, conversing in the most familiar manner after their departure from the house. It is only the heads of parties who are confined to rules, from which they never depart, and who detest each other with the utmost cordiality. The celebrated Edmund Burke, who has always shewn himself a man of principle, during the American war exhausted all the metaphors of his brilliant imagination against the administration which conducted it; he one day finished one of his violent speeches, with the most dreadful maledictions against the ministry, and assured them, that the first thing he would teach his grand-children, when they began to lisp, would be also to curse such wretches. After having pronounced these words of peace, he left the assembly.

The loss which the English supported with the greatest difficulty, during the whole American war, was that of their army at Saratoga; for they had conceived not only the highest opinion of it, but also of the general who had the command. The unhappy catastrophe attending its captivity, was also the cause why France threw off the mask, and declared the Americans a free people.

Burgoyne was permitted to return to Europe on his parole, to undertake his own defence; but was denied the liberty of seeing the sovereign, under pretence of being a prisoner. This circumstance was even urged to prevent him from taking a seat in the House of Commons: however, the latter attempt proved unsuccessful. Burgoyne there tried to justify his conduct, but in a general and vague manner, as he still wished to screen the ministers: they, however, being anxious alone for their own preservation, kept no measures with him, and forced
this

this unfortunate man, who is one of the few English officers who understand any thing of military tactics, to resign all his employments.

Burgoyne upon this appealed to the nation at large, in a memorial which is a master-piece, not only on account of the matter which it contains, but also from the affecting manner in which it is composed. In this production he fully develops the ignorance and baseness of the ministers. He had before represented the impossibility of penetrating with his little army through the woods of America; but so far from attending to his judicious remonstrances, they were pleased to reiterate their orders, in the most positive terms, to attempt the undertaking. Burgoyne was a soldier;—he saw himself ruined beyond hope, but he felt it his duty to obey. He imagined that, by thus sacrificing himself and his little army, the ministers intended to realise schemes of a much greater importance to the nation. As a citizen, his own private feelings were lost in the interests of the state: and as a warrior, he was obliged to console himself with the idea, that the bravest commanders had often experienced the same fate.

This production of general Burgoyne's accompanied with documents which prove all that he has asserted, still remains unanswered.

CHAPTER II.

National Pride—Character—Anecdote concerning some German Emigrants—General Knowledge—Liberty of the Press—Newspapers—Letters of Junius—Mr. Horne Tooke—The Abuse of the Public Prints—Their Utility—History and Character of Mr. Wilkes—Alderman Crosby—His Imprisonment in the Tower—His Release and Triumph.

THE national pride of the English is a natural consequence of a political constitution, by which every citizen is exempted from any other dependence than that imposed by the laws.

This pride is carried among them to a great length. Indeed, how is it possible to know and to feel all the merit of such a system of liberty, without attaching an uncommon value to it? This same sentiment, with which we so violently reproach the English of the present times, has always been felt by the most enlightened nations in the world.

The Greeks and Romans carried it still farther. This laudable pride, which with them was united to a lively and fervid patriotism, occasioned those heroic actions which will for ever be engraved in the records of immortality. If the modern history of England be equally filled with glorious achievements, it is to a love of their country that all this

ought

ought to be ascribed; a love which, carried to the extreme, as it has been, by those haughty islanders, cannot be conceived without a certain degree of contempt for those nations who do not possess similar sensations.

This fault, if it is one, is still more common amongst the Spaniards than them; but being founded on no solid grounds, it has become very justly a subject of ridicule. The English themselves are hated on this account, although their very enemies, at the bottom of their hearts, pay tribute to their extraordinary merit.—Envy will glide into nations, as well as individuals.

There are, perhaps, no people in Europe who possess so much natural pride as the French; it will be easy, with a little penetration, to reconcile this with that urbanity and those polite manners for which they are so distinguished. It is under this mask that the sly Frenchman conceals those marks of envy with which he views his English neighbours.

It was this offensive pride of the English that so many nations strove to humble during the American war. Many even of the states of Germany, among whom the spirit of imitation exercises such a despotic rule, that they neither think, live, nor exist but after the French, were animated with the same desire. They carried their madness so far as to forget the blood and the treasures, which that nation, in the present century, had sacrificed for the advantage and repose of their country. They even wished, without knowing why, to see the source of her greatness dried up.

It ought, however, to be remarked, that the principal members of the empire, guided by a more sound and judicious policy, trembled for England; even Switzerland, which was neither connected

with her by politics nor commerce, offered up continual vows for her preservation.

A traveller, more especially if he passes immediately from France into Great Britain, in looking for that politeness at once so splendid and so trifling, which he has been used to, will not fail to imagine the English rude and uncultivated; and this merely because he does not give himself the trouble to search beyond the surface of their characters.

Grosley, a member of the French academy, recounts, with some humour, in one of his letters, a circumstance that happened to him. He had gone to England, prejudiced with the idea, that he was about to visit the most unpolished nation in Europe. A few days after his arrival he went to the theatre. The pit was very crowded; and being there alone, and exceedingly inquisitive, he began to recollect the little English of which he was master, and put several questions to the person next him. His neighbour, who did not understand a word of the jargon which he uttered, rises precipitately turns his back to him and departs. Grosley was but little surprised at this conduct, so extremely ungenteel in appearance, and which, for some moments, only served to confirm him in his former opinion: but he was soon put to the blush when he saw the Englishman return. This good-natured man had perceived at the other end of the pit, one of his friends who spoke French; and having pierced the crowd which separated them, he returned with much difficulty, leading him in his hand.—I ask, whether this is true politeness or not? A Frenchman, by paying him a handsome compliment, would have imagined that he had done enough; the Englishman on the contrary, thought that he ought to do more, and he accordingly did it. If it is then in actions, and not in simple words that the real urbanity
consists

consists, one is obliged to confess that the English are the most polished nation in Europe.

The principle of such actions is there also more pure, because a beggar has no occasion to humble himself before the most wealthy, and a citizen in easy circumstances knows no bounds to his independence.

The moral character of the English has indeed degenerated, but, notwithstanding this, it is still estimable: for it is not from its parliaments, its oriental depredators, and the crews of its privateers, who all aim at a certain end, that we ought to judge of the nation. Many members of parliament aspire at eminent situations and allow themselves to be corrupted; so also do the adventurers who leave Europe with an intention to plunder Asia; and it is the very nature of pirates to rob and slaughter.

Is it from the refuse of a community that we are to imbibe our opinions of the moral character of a people, or from a multitude of godlike actions, which are performed every day, by thousands in this island?

An extraordinary event, which occurred a few years since, will serve to elucidate the noble and generous manner of thinking among the English. The emigrations from the empire, of which such sad complaints are made, even at this day, and which are founded on reasons partly just, and partly imaginary, gave an opportunity to a German gentleman to form a very singular scheme.

The name of this projector and his intentions, are still unknown; the arts also which he practised to put in execution such a well concerted plan, are equally obscure: it is however, certain, that a common genius durst never imagine, far less be able to put in execution, an enterprize of this nature. In the year 1765, he went to England at the head of

800 adventurers, consisting of men, women, and children, whom he had collected in the Palatinate, Franconia, and Suabia, by promising them that they would be much more happy in the English colonies.

On their arrival at the port of London, this singular mandisappeared, and has never since been heard of.

At once miserable and disappointed, these unfortunate wretches, neither knowing the language, nor being acquainted with any of the inhabitants, and with only a few rags to cover them, were entirely bewildered in that extensive capital. Without any asylum, without even bread for their children, who asked for it with the most piercing cries, they knew not to whom they could address themselves.

In hopes of a less cruel destiny, they lay down in the open air, in the midst of those streets nearest to the wharf where they had been landed. In every other city, even in Paris itself the unexpected arrival of a colony of eight hundred persons, would have been talked of every where, and proper measures taken accordingly: but the landing of such a numerous body was for a long time unknown in London. The inhabitants indeed, of that part of the town, and also the passengers, were greatly astonished at the appearance of this singular groupe, who bewailed their misfortunes in an unknown language; but not being able to discover the cause, they gave themselves but little concern on the subject.

Two days passed in this manner, and these poor people remained exposed to the inclemency of the elements, and the cravings of hunger. Some died for want, on the third day. Their misery was now at the extreme, for their arrival was unknown any where else than in this little corner of the suburbs: not a single word of it had transpired either in the city or Westminster.

The inhabitants in the neighbourhood were not, however, unfeeling spectators of so many calamities; they aided them as far as they were able; but what are the feeble succours of poverty at such a crisis? The bakers were accustomed to send their servants every morning loaded with baskets of bread, which they distributed according to the directions of their masters. One of these happening to pass near the place where these emigrants were encamped, heard that they had been several hours without any subsistence. "If it is so," says he, at the same time placing his pannier in the midst of them, "our customers must have patience to-day; were my master to lose them all, he would not be angry; I will," added he, "aid these poor creatures, if I pay for it out of my own wages."—I trust that the behaviour of this man does not need a commentary.

The reverend Mr. Waschel, a clergyman of the German church, who lived near to them, at last resolved to advertise this singular event in the newspapers. In a letter which he inserted, and which was signed with his own name, he particularizes, in a most affecting detail, the misery of his countrymen, and implores in their behalf the generous compassion of the English, on which those wretches had so much relied when they left their native country. The effect of this was incredible and beyond expectation.

The morning papers are generally printed at eight o'clock; by nine a man arrives on horseback from one of the most distant parts of Westminster, and brings to Mr. Waschel a bank note for 100l. sterling. The messenger would not mention the donor, but it was afterwards found to be the old countess of Chesterfield who performed so charitable an action.

This might be called the earnest of the whole nation. It seemed to rain bank notes and guineas upon

upon the good priest. Coffee-houses were opened for subscriptions, attendants were appointed to supply them with necessaries, as they themselves were not able to buy them; physicians and apothecaries were assigned, and nurses and interpreters appointed to them; in a word the wants of this deserted band were satisfied, their forlorn situation removed, and they themselves inspired with the sweet hope of better prospects before the middle of that very day.

In the mean time the subscriptions continued open, and there never, perhaps, was such a general contribution. There were but few rich people, of a certain rank, in all the kingdom, who did not assist on this occasion. I myself have read the list of those benefactors to my countrymen, and have counted more than twenty who gave a hundred pounds each, and some even more. The sum total is unknown to me; it was, however, sufficient to entertain this numerous body of people, during five months, in London; at the end of that period they were carried to Carolina, in vessels hired for the purpose, and provided with proper necessaries. They had a very excellent passage to America, and received, at the instant of their arrival, not only every thing necessary for their establishment, but also the remainder of the money which had been collected for them.

It may be imagined that the Germans, settled in London, shewed themselves equally generous towards their countrymen as the English.—Not only those in easy circumstances, but even opulent people, to whom the nation had confided the care of these unfortunate wretches, received money for their services out of the fund arising from the subscriptions, and charged at the highest rate!

It has been observed that common people in England are more intelligent and judicious than in any other country. The free and unrestrained manner

manner in which they speak and write, on every subject, is the real cause of this. One is astonished to hear some of the very lowest of the populace reason concerning the laws, the right of property, privileges, &c.

If the English * newspapers generally contain a large portion of dull and trifling matter, on the other hand they often abound with passages worthy to be read and preserved. Sometimes a politician will insert an essay on a subject which concerns the welfare of the whole nation, and every body, even a fish-woman, is able to comprehend it. It is not at all uncommon to observe such persons reading and commenting on the public prints.

Besides original intelligence, the prodigious number of advertisements make them entertaining, and are often attended with the strangest consequences.

I know a woman who ran away from her husband after having robbed him. Without the assistance of the newspapers the despair of this repentant wife would have been unknown, and the dishonour of her spouse made public; but a lucky advertisement informed them of each other's situation, and their reconciliation was equally quick and secret. The husband having given out that his wife was gone into the country, addressed a letter to her, without either inserting her name or residence, but couched in such terms, that she could readily comprehend it. In this he promised to forget and forgive all that had happened; and she having accidentally read the paper, sent an answer by the same conveyance, mentioned her terms, and at the end of three days returned to him without having occasioned the least suspicion by her absence. The printer is paid for this kind of correspondence, and in general all articles which rather interest individuals

* In the year 1780, in London alone, 63,000 were printed every week.

duals than the public. He neither inquires concerning the name, the business, the intentions, or place of residence of the advertiser. Those speculations which are written on national affairs and articles of intelligence are inserted gratis. The author is always sure of remaining undiscovered, by means of a box which opens towards the street, and through which any person may thrust a manuscript. If you choose to make yourself known to the printer, he is obliged to observe secrecy. Nothing can force him to violate this, for were he to do so, he would not only lose his business, but also have his house exposed to the fury of the populace.

He is obliged to answer for every thing he prints, whether it be a libel, a piece of scandal, or a pasquinade. The offence, in any of these cases, will subject him to a process. If the king or parliament is attacked, the attorney-general is the accuser; and on such occasions it is not unusual to see the publisher defended by the most famous advocate at the bar.

Woodfall, the printer of the public Advertiser, once the most famous newspaper in London, was tried on account of Junius's celebrated letter to the king, which is a master-piece of eloquence, boldness and truth. All England was interested in the issue, and the most famous lawyers were employed, not simply to defend an individual, but to support that inviolable liberty which every Englishman arrogates, of speaking or writing openly and without reserve his sentiments of public affairs. Woodfall was declared innocent, and the process was terminated in such a manner, as made it impossible to discover the ingenious author, whose name remains unknown to this very day. The critics pretend that it is the most perfect prose composition in the English language. Certain expressions, and a peculiar kind of

genius

genius exhibited throughout the whole, have made some suppose that the celebrated Edmund Burke is this same Junius.

It is not at all uncommon to see a printer put in the pillory, or dragged to gaol; by naming the author they escape these indignities; this, however, they never do without his consent. The reverend Mr. Horne Tooke, curate of Brentford, was so generous as to avow himself on an occasion of this kind in the year 1778.

This singular person, who, as a man, a patriot, and an orator, has acquired such high claims to the general esteem, and to the remembrance of his fellow citizens in particular, as the founder of that celebrated * society, the end of which was to support the rights and privileges of the nation, had, in a newspaper, described the last war in America as a massacre; and the court party, who instituted and supported it, as so many assassins. The printer being prosecuted, and urged by the author, named him; and the intrepid clergyman was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment. Respect for his profession saved him from the pillory.

The manner in which the people often use the wretches condemned to this kind of punishment, renders it equally dangerous and disgraceful. Sometimes, however, so far from being infamous, it becomes glorious and honourable. I myself saw such a scene. It was a printer, who, while in the pillory, was attended by an innumerable multitude, by whom he was saluted with the utmost respect, and hailed with repeated acclamations. They brought him refreshment, and, as he could not use his hands, they themselves helped him. The pillory, which was crowned with garlands of flowers, was surrounded by persons of the first rank, who, discoursed familiarly

* The Bill of Rights.

familiarly with this lucky criminal; to whom, if I may so express myself, the pillory seemed a triumphal car; and however constrained the position in which he was obliged to stand for an hour, that hour might be esteemed, perhaps, the most agreeable in his life.

In the year 1779, 4,500 numbers of the Public Advertiser were printed every day during the winter, and 3,000 during the summer; and of the Daily Advertiser, which contains little else but advertisements, no less than 5,000 were circulated. This kind of business is extremely lucrative, and maintains, in the city of London alone, a prodigious multitude of persons; one with great propriety may say, that numbers of idlers are by this means brought up to do nothing. Among these may be reckoned the paragraph writers, who go to the coffee houses and public places to pick up anecdotes and the news of the day, which they reduce into short sentences, and are paid in proportion to their number and authenticity. The speeches in parliament are taken by a certain class of men who are known in no other country than England. The proficient in this art will not forget a single word, however fast the member may speak; their manner of writing is by means of certain signs, which not only express words, but also whole sentences.

A newspaper is also printed by the court, under the title of the Gazette. It is dearer, and at the same time less interesting, than any of the others. The editor of this is a man of some consequence, and generally a member of parliament, who repays the emoluments attached to his office by voting with the ministry.

The Gazette contains all the acts of parliament; the petition; the addresses of the counties and villages; the king's proclamation; a list of the promotions

the army and navy; the appointment to vacant employments, and all news of which they wish the people to be informed. During a war they insert there the dispatches from their generals and admirals, when they are flattering, taking care, however, to suppress all articles which may tend obliquely to censure the selves. Every thing against their own party is suppressed.

Such was the practice of lord North. Lord Chatham followed an opposite method during his glorious administration. All the letters from the commanding officers were printed word for word, without the least amendment or restriction: the public were informed of every thing even in the middle of the night. This manner of acting, at once so just and so candid, necessarily inspired the nation with the most entire confidence in this great man.

It is to this passion among the English for reading, daily, the prodigious number of newspapers and political pamphlets, that their extreme gravity and unsociable disposition ought to be attributed.

In general nothing is more difficult than to make an Englishman speak; he answers to every thing by *yes* or *no*; address him, however, on some political subject and he is suddenly animated; he opens his mouth and becomes eloquent; for this seems to be connected from his infancy with his very existence.

A foreigner will find himself exactly in the same predicament after a long residence in England. The same cause produces the same effect. I have known some, who on their arrival in London, were entirely ignorant of politics, and who soon afterwards carried this taste to enthusiasm. This matter is easily explained; it is in quality of the citizen of a free state and as a rational creature, that one becomes solicitous about public affairs. Many are often personally

personally interested either by means of themselves or others; some search into the characters of those who hold the reins of government; others are connected with them in the most intimate manner. Nothing but politics is heard in any society; they talk of nothing but about meetings to consider of the affairs of the state, deputations to present petitions, remonstrances, &c.

You may insert your opinions on any public matter in the newspapers, with a certainty of being read a thousand times. All these circumstances together inspire one with a lively interest in the concerns of the kingdom, and occasion the reading of the daily prints to be actually an epidemical passion among the English.

It is the custom no where but in England, to converse with every body about these publications. Strangers, therefore, are not qualified to judge of the excellence of these communications, but by the good effects that result from them. The anecdote of the German emigrants, which I have before mentioned, is a very convincing proof of this. If compassion had, been stimulated from every pulpit, or charity requested by sound of drum, such a generous donation could never have been obtained, as by means of a simple letter, read in all parts of London. The whole of that extensive capital was at one and the same instant informed of this melancholy circumstance, whereas a simple hearsay being always obscure and equivocal, people of sense would have paid no attention to it,

How many times have not the same means been employed to serve the purposes of patriotism, and to support schemes combined with equal wisdom and sagacity! The greatest blessings, unfortunately, from the very nature of things, have their concomitant disadvantages, and so it is with the newspapers.

Without

Without adverting to the circumstance of lord George Gordon, that dangerous fool, who, in 1780, made use of this means to assemble a mob, and put London in the most imminent danger, there are a number of rogues who, by means of advertisements, cheat the multitude in a thousand different ways; and although the people are daily instructed by frequent examples, which ought to banish their credulity, they are still disposed to believe every impostor.

Among these are the money-lenders, who wish to advance sums on good securities; and who after they have got possession of the notes, bonds, &c. instantly disappear and leave the person duped to lament his folly. Others make an affecting recital of the melancholy situation of a widow burthened with a large family, or of an old gentleman who languishes in the utmost misery, and whose name they are obliged to conceal, on account of his extraction: they, however, never fail, with the most scrupulous exactness, to mention the place where donations will be received.

The public papers usually abound with offers of large sums to those persons who have sufficient interest with the great, procure lucrative employments; to this transaction inviolable secrecy is always pledged. Many authors also insert criticisms in them on their works, and next day attack their own judgments under a feigned name. Their sole aim is to make a noise and to be known, and they often attain it.

Women of the town, under the mask of the most scrupulous virtue, testify their wishes to procure a husband of good character.

They never fail to add, that they are rich, young and handsome; and affirm that they want nothing with their future spouse, but a small fortune, or a steady employment. Young men bred in the country

try, and others without experience, often fall into the snare. On an interview, they find these bewitching creatures, who appear as mild and gentle as innocence itself, know how to affect their compassion, by a touching recital of the persecutions of their relations or guardians; and never fail to make it appear clearly, that it would be the easiest thing in the world to get possession of their fortune. This story has the proper effect; the simpleton believes every thing, and never finds, till too late, that he has been grossly imposed upon.

There are also male advertisers, who make similar proposals; with this difference, however, that, instead of offering to share a large fortune, they generally wish to meet a lady with one. If they are not able to enumerate a catalogue of their personal accomplishments they are sure to boast of their good sense, their excellent character; and in one word, of their inclination to consult, on all occasions, the happiness of their future wives. These latter sometimes succeed, but less frequently than the former.

Some people insert advertisements of this kind merely from pastime. Under different signatures they pretend to want husbands and wives, and manage interviews between the persons who answer them: this often gives occasion to the most comical scenes.

But no men know better how to profit by the newspapers than the stock-jobbers. They declare war or peace at their pleasure, sign treaties of alliance, and fabricate events, which they seem to substantiate with so much address, that they have all the appearance of reality. By such arts, immense sums are lost and won every day.

From the newspapers, which form a very lucrative branch of trade, the government have found means to draw one hundred thousand pounds annually. Every paper pays three halfpence to the re-

venue

venue in stamp-duty, and a tax of two shillings and sixpence is imposed on each advertisement.

All periodical publications are charged with a certain impost, and among these the pamphlets that are daily printed and forgotten.

As I am now mentioning publications of this kind, I shall say something of that celebrated paper called the North Briton. The forty-fifth number of this gave rise to a very singular event; no publication, indeed, was ever attended with such singular consequences. It occasioned a misunderstanding betwixt the people and the legislative power of that puissant empire which lasted more than ten years and put the constitution in the utmost danger. It robbed the king of the affections of his people; immortalized Wilkes, the author, and established ministerial influence for ever.

As this circumstance, so interesting for the philosopher, the politician, and every man of reflection, is not well known in Germany, and the conduct of Wilkes has been grossly misrepresented, I imagine that it will not be improper here, to give a recital of the whole, equally true and circumstantial.

The administration of lord Bute, which commenced with the reign of the present king, and which had for its first-fruits the unpopular peace of 1762, greatly displeased the nation. His Lordship was a Scotsman; he dismissed a great number of the English from their employments, to bestow them on his countrymen; and this impolitic conduct greatly added to the general discontent. Wilkes happened then to be a member of the House of Commons, in which he had sat two former parliaments. He possessed a sound judgment, an enlightened mind, a profound knowledge of the rights of the nation, a courage and a firmness that fitted him for any enterprise; he was, however, destitute of one quality of the greatest importance in his situation;

ation; he was but a poor orator. After having dissipated a considerable fortune, he solicited a lucrative post. Two sorts of employment were the objects of his ambition; he wished to be a governor of one of the American provinces, or ambassador to the Porte. He asks one of these from lord Bute: that nobleman promises to gratify his inclinations, and disappoints him. This conduct irritated Wilkes: as he wrote infinitely better than he spoke, he seized the pen, and cunningly profiting by the discontent of the people, attacked the minister. This was almost the sole intention of the periodical paper, entitled the North Briton. The subject was ample, and the imprudent conduct of lord Bute furnished him with materials. That minister burnt with revenge, and wanted nothing but a favourable opportunity to gratify it: one soon presented itself.

The speech which the king makes to his parliament is always composed by the minister. Being first read and criticised in the council of state, notwithstanding it is delivered by the sovereign, it may be considered as coming from the court party. His majesty, when addressing himself to both houses on the peace of Versailles in 1762, made use of these expressions: "after having, in concert with my good brother the king of prussia, signed the peace &c." All those who are the least acquainted with the political history of the times, must recollect in what manner this peace was concerted betwixt them: it is an anecdote well known in England; therefore Wilkes did not hesitate to observe in one of his periodical papers, that the assertion was a *falsehood*. Lord Bute, under pretence that such an expression was a personal attack on the monarch, immediately caused him to be seized, and imprisoned in the Tower.

In this he followed the example of several of his predecessors, who before had exerted a similar authority.

authority; with this difference, however, that it was always in cases of *high treason*.

According to the *habeas corpus act*, the prisoner has a right to investigate the process against him, and see if his confinement is conformable to the laws of the land. Wilkes, accordingly, claimed that privilege a few days after.

The English nation was interested in the event, because the rights of every citizen were affected by it. Wilkes, the champion of the people, supported by the first and most celebrated lawyers in the kingdom, presents himself before his judges, accompanied by an innumerable multitude, who waited the issue of this important affair with the greatest impatience. Judgment was given in his favour. He was declared innocent of the accusation; and the lords Egremont and Hallifax, who had signed the warrant, were decreed to pay 5000*l.* sterling as damages.

They had gone so far as to seize and examine his papers. Wilkes, therefore, the moment that he was released, repairs to Sir John Fielding, a celebrated justice of the peace, to request from him a warrant to apprehend the two ministers; whom he treated as thieves, who had pillaged his dwelling-house. The magistrate did not accede to this demand: however, the boldness of the proceeding did Mr. Wilkes a great deal of honour.

In the mean time some of his papers gave his enemies, who were undoubtedly the most powerful men in the kingdom, an opportunity to commence a new process against him. Being unwilling to wait the event, he leaves England, and travels through France and Italy. His prosecutors, profiting by his absence, procure judgment against him; and a majority of the House of Commons being in the interest of the court, he is expelled the parliament.

D

Being

Being soon after destitute of money, and persecuted by his foreign creditors, he finds himself constrained to return to his native country. He accordingly repairs to London, in consequence of a bold plan which he had concerted; and the prudence and firmness with which he accomplished it, were at last crowned with the most complete success. His first step was to present himself before the court which had given judgment against him: there he receives a sentence of imprisonment for two years in the king's bench. He submits to it, and goes to surrender himself; the populace however, try to prevent him, and he is obliged to conceal himself in a tavern. His design was to remain there till the tumult was abated; but this was in vain. The house was actually besieged; and the mob, instead of dispersing, became every moment more numerous. Having remained till night, Wilkes, who was determined to obey the laws, put a scheme in execution which never had been practised before. We hear every day of people disguising themselves to escape out of prison; but, till then, I believe, no one ever disguised himself to get into one. This was actually done by him; and in consequence of it, he arrived in the king's bench.

This prison, situated in St. George's Fields, was surrounded next day by a prodigious crowd. They intended to have demolished this enormous mass from its very foundation, and thus deliver their favourite. This project was about to be executed, when Wilkes appears at a window, and, by means of prayers and entreaties, prevents them. The tumult was not, however, appeased until the arrival of the military; who, by the blood of some of the ringleaders, put an end to the strange scene. A young man of low extraction, called Allen, was killed on this occasion. His death, which in any other country would have scarce been mentioned in a newspaper, was treated as if it had been an affair of consequence.

consequence. The people became outrageous, moderate men murmured, the ministers trembled, and the king himself was displeased with the event.

In the mean time Wilkes lived very comfortable in prison. He received a number of visits daily; persons of the first rank and most distinguished merit went to see him, and offered their services.

His wants were supplied, and the Society called the Bill of Rights paid all the debts which he had contracted in England, and which were very considerable.

He was, at the same time, elected knight of the shire for the county of Middlesex.

His confinement in 1770, was the signal for new troubles. The House of Commons, who looked on him as incapable of sitting in parliament on account of his expulsion, chose Colonel Luttrell in his place, as representative for the county of Middlesex, although that gentleman had but a few votes in his favour. This was looked upon as an attempt against the fundamental principles of the constitution; for all the legislative body united, and still less the House of Commons, have not power to reject a member chosen according to the proper forms.

Relying on the goodness of his cause, Wilkes defies the Commons, who were now abhorred by the whole nation, and treated by them in the most contemptuous manner. It would have been easy for him to have resumed his place in the house, and to have maintained himself there by the assistance of an hundred thousand of his adherents. Such an act of violence would have been attended with consequences entirely different from those of lord George Gordon's, whose party was composed entirely of the dregs of the people. Wilkes had, on

the other hand, the best and wisest part of the nation in his favour; nay, even a third of that very parliament which he bullied. Some of his friends advised him to carry things to extremities; but this he would not consent to, and waited peaceably for a dissolution of parliament.

Notwithstanding the intrigues of the ministry, he was, during these transactions, elected an alderman of London, appointed one of the sheriffs of the county of Middlesex, and at last, in the year 1774, chosen lord mayor. His ambition was now fully satisfied, but the essential part of his scheme was still unaccomplished; he wished to possess wealth, and he attained it. In the year 1778, he was elected to the important and lucrative office of chamberlain of the city; an appointment that entirely satisfied all his wishes.

If a design wisely concerted, seconded by uncommon talents, by astonishing courage and firmness, and carried on to its completion with a perseverance that nothing could dishearten; if all these, I say, have a claim to our admiration, Wilkes surely is entitled to it.

Had he so pleased, he might have become the Cataline of his country: he abhorred the idea, and chose to be her benefactor.

On more than one occasion, he has actually been so. During the lawless tumult occasioned by lord George Gordon, when the ministry trembled and remained inactive, and the magistrates durst not leave their houses, he was seen presenting himself to the tumultuous populace, and braving death itself to save the bank, which they were about to pillage. He made use of prayers, entreaties, and menaces by turns; he even went so far as to seize some of the ringleaders with his own hands. This behaviour, so courageous and so patriotic, restored him to the regard of his sovereign,

sovereign, who, for twenty years, had vowed a mortal hatred against him. He is at this very moment one of the most active partizans of the minister.

It was in the year 1772, when Wilkes was only an alderman, that Crosby, then lord mayor, had a singular dispute with the House of Commons, which, if detailed with fidelity, would better characterise the constitution, the manners, and the ideas of the English than whole volumes written on the subject. Far from thinking that this anecdote composed part of the history of our own times, one would be tempted to imagine himself transported by the power of magic to some country of romance, or carried back to that happy period when the splendour of Rome and Greece shone unrivalled in the world. This event, and indeed almost every thing that concerns England, is only known in Germany by means of the newspapers, and therefore must be very little understood.

A pamphlet having been published, containing many reflections on the House of Commons, they declared it a libel; and gave orders to the serjeant at arms to seize the two printers who had published it. This officer accordingly repairs to the city, where they happened to reside, with an intention to execute the commission. By his instructions, he was not to attend the common forms, notwithstanding it is illegal to arrest any one in the city without having the warrant backed by the chief magistrate.

One of the printers allows himself to be taken without the least resistance. According to law, the prisoner must be carried before a justice of the peace, to see whether the detention is legal; and this the officer of the House of Commons complied with, notwithstanding his order was an emanation of the legislative authority.

On his arrival at Guildhall, Wilkes and Oliver happening to be on the bench. On examining the warrant, these two aldermen, observing that Crosby's signature was not affixed, declare it to be informal, and released the printer.

The serjeant at arms, covered with confusion, departs to look after the other culprit, with whom he hopes to be more fortunate: for, as it was now dinner-time, he imagined that these two magistrates would depart; and hoped, on his return, to find others more compliant.

Full of this idea, he goes to the other printer; but he being better acquainted with the laws, insists on seeing the warrant; and not finding it signed by the lord mayor, he immediately sends for a constable, secures the officer, and accompanies him to Guildhall, attended by a prodigious crowd. The aldermen being gone to dine with the lord mayor, the prisoner is conducted to the mansion-house.

Crosby had the reputation of being a worthy man, but his knowledge was very superficial. It was only on account of seniority and his wealth that he had been appointed to the high office which he then filled. His ambition was limited, and so was also his patriotism. His advanced age made him sigh after repose, and he had no wish for any thing else. The issue of this affair would, therefore, have been entirely different, if he had been allowed to proceed according to his own inclination; he was, however, obliged from circumstances to act in concert with his colleagues.

Wilkes and Oliver were the two most strenuous assertors of public liberty in the whole corporation of London. We have already given the character of the one: the other was a member of parliament, and equal to him in patriotism. Oliver was also a man of character, and had a noble and independent way of thinking.

Guided by these men, Crosby calls in the printer, bears his complaint, and orders the serjeant at arms to be carried to prison.

This act of authority occasioned a prodigious disturbance; and Crosby, Oliver and Wilkes, were summoned to appear before the House of Commons. The two first obey, and go in procession from the city, attended by several hundred carriages belonging to people of the first rank. Wilkes also accompanies them to the door; but, as he would not be permitted to appear as one of the members of Middlesex, he proceeds no further.

At their arrival, they are received with shouts of applause by a prodigious concourse of people, who surrounded the house, and mal-treated all those who were of the court party.

Lord North, who had been the most violent against the city magistrates, had procured two hundred of the guards to protect himself and his friends; but fearing that so small a number could not save him from an incensed populace, who threatened his destruction, he gets into a hackney coach, accompanied by a valet, and attempts to steal into the house in disguise.

This project, however, was unsuccessful; he is known, the horses are stopped, and he himself is dragged by the hair, and exposed to a thousand indignities.

The existence of this man, to whom England unfortunately gave birth, now hung suspended by a thread: but the destinies resolved that he should still live for the unhappiness of thousands of his equals. The soldiers having come to his assistance, and two of his creatures having generously shielded him with their own bodies, he was at last snatched from a certain death.—Having thus escaped the fate of the unhappy De Witt, he repairs to parliament, disfigured and almost unknown. He begins

with recounting his sad adventure, while his eyes stream with tears, in that hypocritical tone which had been so successful with Cromwell. He beseeches Heaven to bear witness to his innocence, and the uprightness of his intentions; which having no other end than the good of the nation, gave him a claim on the gratitude, rather than the curses of his fellow-citizens.

In this state of anxiety and grief, trembling lest the horrible scene, from which he had just escaped, should be renewed, he proposes to the accused members to repair, by an immediate apology, the irregularity of their conduct; assuring them, that the house was disposed to accept a very slight one.

Oliver rejects this proposition with the utmost scorn; adding, that to expect an apology from those who had supported the rights of their fellow-citizens, was the grossest insult; and that he and his adherents ought rather to offer excuses to the whole nation for their mal-administration. Crosby being of the same opinion, they were, by a plurality of voices, sent to the Tower.

The Tower is not a horrible prison, like the Bastile; it rather resembles a little town, abounding with tradesmen and artizans of every kind. A prodigious number of people reside there, and the apartments are very commodious. Crosby and Oliver, on their arrival, hired two little houses; and the numerous visits of their friends scarcely allowed them to perceive that they were prisoners.

While confined here, extraordinary honours were conferred on them; and it might be esteemed by both as the most happy epocha in their lives. Every ward in the city sent them deputations. These went in form, accompanied by an immense crowd of carriages, and in the name of the people of England, thanked them
for

for having courageously defended the rights of their fellow-citizens, and sacrificed so generously their own liberty for the public welfare. Besides this, several cities, counties, and associations returned them thanks; sent them their freedom and accompanied it with gifts. London, in particular, presented them with two massy cups of gold, on which the arms of the city were engraved.

It is impossible to recollect, without admiration, the fervour and patriotic enthusiasm which prevailed every where during three weeks, at the end of which time the parliament was prorogued.

On this occasion the magistrates of London, clothed in their robes, the sheriffs of the county of Middlesex, the common council, all the militia of the city, and an immense crowd of distinguished persons, repaired to the Tower, accompanied by drums, cymbals, and trumpets, to receive the two prisoners. Being placed in the state-coach, they were conducted to the Mansion-house in triumph, amidst the ringing of bells, the firing of cannon, and every other demonstration of joy. The windows were crowded with beauties, who waved their handkerchiefs and added to the public triumph. The general enthusiasm cannot be well described: I myself saw many weep for joy, and realise the witty remark of lord Shaftesbury, who says, that enthusiasm is epidemic, and, like yawning, affects every body around.

Let the reader recollect, that all this was transacted, not in the corner of a distant province, but in the midst of the residence of a powerful monarch; that the ministers, whose authority is very great, were the enemies and the prosecutors of the two prisoners; and that this was not a tumult or a revolt, but a public

act which the laws, far from prohibiting, seemed rather to authorise.

I shall never forget this memorable scene ;—with me it shall always be sacred. It is engraven in my mind in never-fading characters, and can only be effaced with my existence.

CHAPTER III.

The Fertility of England—Its Climate, Productions, and Industry—Society of Arts—Duke of Bridgewater's Canal—Extraordinary Inventions—Wedge-wood's Manufactures—Mrs. Abington—Beggars of Rank—Calas—Colonel Champigny—Societies of Rogues.

THE south of Great Britain is almost an entire flat, and contains but very few mountains. If the principality of Wales, and some of the northern counties, be excepted, all that immense island resembles a garden, adorned with fine views and romantic prospects, which do not yield in any thing to those parts of Italy which are so much extolled. The riches of the inhabitants; the neatness and cleanliness of their manner of living, which is discoverable in the very cottages; the noble roads; and a fertile and well cultivated soil, form one great whole, which the most phlegmatic observer is forced to admire.

The greatest objection that can be urged against England is the insalubrity of the air, and the indispensable custom of burning coals.

It is true that the climate is subject to frequent changes, but it is generally supportable both in the summer and winter. It is not bad health, but a love of variety and dissipation, that drives so many rich Englishmen to the south of France, either to squander their guineas there, or to economise in a country where every thing is sold at a low price, after they have hurt their fortunes at home. As the reason of these journies is not very flattering to their pride, they disguise it under the pretence of the badness of their native air.

As to the English who have spent part of their lives in the Indies, and who have been of course used to a warmer sun, it is very evident that they must feel in a very lively manner, the difference on their return, and that the air of Provence will be more genial to them than that of England.

It was this circumstance which obliged the celebrated lord Clive to spend two years of his life at Montpellier; where he hoped a long time, but in vain, to dissipate those hypochondriac humours with which he was tormented. He carried them back to England, where they changed to a profound melancholy: which, after preying for some time on his body, at last became victorious, and constrained him, as it were, to deprive himself of existence. Notwithstanding the care of his family to conceal the manner of his death, all the world soon knew, that the vanquisher and scourge of Asia, hanged himself in his own bed-chamber.

What will fully evince, how little the climate, and use of coal-fires are hurtful to the health of the English, is the great number of old men who may there be met with constantly. On reading the list of deaths, one readily perceives that this class of men is equal, if not more numerous in that than in any other country in Europe. How is it possible that we should find so many aged people in London, where
the

the consumption of this kind of fuel is excessive, if it were hurtful? How comes it, that it does not affect the women, and that the complexion of the English is superior to that of all the other Europeans?

The plague has ever been uncommon in England; and this is high proof in favour of the goodness of the climate. To this may be added, the healthy constitutions of the natives, their vigour, intrepidity, and perpetual exertions. All the carpenters, blacksmiths, farriers, miners, porters, and peasants are the most robust men in the world. Charles II. who had visited a good part of Europe, was used to say: "Notwithstanding all the complaints of the disagreeableness and inconstancy of the climate of my native country, it is nevertheless certain, that there is no part in Europe, where it is possible to be out of doors for so many days in the year, or so many hours in a day, as in England." They never experience inundations, so hurtful in other countries; tempests, earthquakes, and famine, are equally unknown to them!

The grass in England is always of an unrivalled beauty, verdure, and extraordinary goodness. From hence proceeds the uncommon attachment of the English to those fine lawns, which they smooth and keep even by means of stone rollers: they are sometimes so very regular, that you may play at bowls on them with as much nicety as you could on a billiard-table; this is a favourite diversion, and is often enjoyed by people of the first rank.

Every part of the country abounds with parks, which are adorned with the most agreeable and romantic landscapes. Almost at every step you meet with alleys of fruit-trees, which conduct you to charming villages; the inhabitants of which are well fed and clothed, and in a state of plenty and abundance, sufficient to prove that theirs is the native country of riches, liberty and improvement.

Nevertheless,

Nevertheless, there is not in the whole island, either a society or an individual, whose business it is to animate this universal industry, or to bring agriculture, trade or manufactures, to a greater degree of perfection. As no one is there limited in his rights, or disturbed in the possession of his property, all these advantages naturally accrue of themselves. To the same causes the flourishing state of Holland may be attributed. But however instructive the example of these two states may seem to be, one is nevertheless authorised to believe from the conduct of almost all the sovereigns in Europe, that they have unanimously endeavoured to stifle that industry which in itself is so precious, and in it its consequences so necessary to the grandeur of a state.

Some time since the minister, to augment the number of his dependants, formed the design of erecting a board to watch over the interests of trade. The project was carried into execution: but trade, so far from increasing, declined the moment that these counsellors of commerce began to give her lessons. Of this, authentic proofs were produced, and it was abolished in 1782. Mr. Gibbon, the English Tacitus, was a member of this institution.

The banks of the Thames, from Gravesend to London, are adorned with towns and villages; and the neighbourhood occupied by a prodigious number of builders, who are continually employed in the construction of ships of all dimensions, and of every kind. The river itself is covered with vessels, which are moored in rows, for several miles.

The great industry that reigns every where, forms the most agreeable spectacle. Several thousands live solely by their employments about the shipping. The coal-trade alone occupies an amazing number. The consumption to this article is inconceivable. I have seen a fleet of fifty sail arrive at once from Newcastle, and have been well assured that this is not

part in Gothic characters. In consequence of this there are but very few, even of the learned, who can read the manuscript. The English, for a long time, looked upon as merely an hieroglyphic, of which they could only interpret some passages, till, on the arrival of Raspe in England, it happened to fall into his hands.

That illustrious and intelligent man, who had been for many years employed in the German libraries, was very capable of cutting this Gordian knot: of this he gave sufficient proofs. The government was eager to know its contents; but as many of the first families in the kingdom imagined themselves in some shape interested in the translation, they did not think it prudent to entrust it to a foreigner. A learned Englishman was therefore preferred to Raspe, on whose assistance he greatly depended, on accepting this important and difficult commission: unhappily, however, they quarrelled, and Doomsbook was not translated.

The industry of the English has often received a new degree of energy from the assistance of my countrymen, the Germans. One of them called Spielman constructed, in the reign of Elizabeth, the first paper-mill. Gottfried Box, another, 1590, erected the first machine for the manufacturing of brass wire, and afterwards another for copper-plates. Under the reign of the same queen, a third built the first powder mill. At this very day the best book-binder in London, and an artist so famous in his trade, that his equal has never yet been found, is also a German.

My country was very near snatching from the English the honour of producing the best clock-maker, an art in which, they so much excel, and of gaining the premium which the parliament had assigned in the time-piece which would best discover the longitude at sea. The sum allotted for this use-

of discovery was twenty thousand pounds. A great number of the first artists in Europe animated by the allurements of glory and of gain, became candidates for this reward; but an Englishman, of the name of Harrison, carried away both. It is, however probable, that a watch maker of the name of Thiele de Breine would have supplanted him, if this excellent artisan had carried his watch to London before the payment of the reward; for, in the opinion of the English themselves, his mechanism was more ingeniously constructed, and much more likely than Harrison's to obtain the end proposed.

It is incredible how much, and by how many different means, industry is excited in England.

Without reckoning the usual sums which parliament votes annually in bounties, new objects are continually craving their patronage. Several patriotic societies, which labour with a zeal for the general good, worthy of admiration, follow their example.

The most numerous one that has ever existed in Europe, is the society for the encouragement of arts, manufactures, &c. It was founded in 1753, by William Shipley, and consisted in 1784, of six thousand seven hundred members. The first noblemen in the nation belong to this institution. Every member pays two guineas a year, and this subscription form a sum sufficient for the distribution of a great many premiums, and those of a considerable value.

These rewards are always destined to persons whose original inventions have become serviceable to mankind, or by an improvement of former discoveries, have carried them to a higher degree of perfection.

Their meetings rarely consist of more than two hundred persons; the rest very seldom attend and content themselves with contributing, by their pecuniary assistance, to the noble design of this useful establishment.

establishment. It is not to be doubted that this is the sole motive, as no kind of honour nor any mark of distinction is attached to the members. The principal intention is to improve agriculture, and the arts, by keeping up a constant correspondence with persons of every rank and station, who project schemes likely to be attended with good consequences, or communicate experiments already made, whether unsuccessful or prosperous. Lord Romney has been for many years the president.

Another society has been formed in Brecknockshire, a county situated in the principality of Wales. The object of this institution is agriculture in all its branches, the establishment of manufactures of linen cloth, and the improvement of woollens. They also attend to the reparation of the great roads, and the construction of new ones: in one word, their plan is to give to industry a greater degree of activity and extension.

It is to one man that England is indebted for her inland navigation. Till 1759 the project was not carried into execution; and all the rivers and streams in the island were soon after covered with boats. This benefactor to his country was the Duke of Bridgewater, who has immortalised himself by the construction of a canal, which would not disgrace a monarch. He was only twenty-one years of age, when he conceived this design, worthy of ancient Rome.

His artificial river unites the city of Liverpool with the populous town of Manchester. It is sometimes carried across immense rocks hollowed at top. Sometimes it suddenly vanishes, and makes a thousand turnings in a subterraneous passage eight English miles in length. After appearing all at once it seems suspended in the air, and crossed the Weir by means of immense arches, in such a manner that one may often enjoy the picturesque sight of one vessel

essel navigating in the stream below, and of another which crosses it, and seems to sail in the element above.

An Englishman of the name of Wedgewood has built a whole village in Staffordshire, which he has called Etruria, a name well merited by its superb works in the Etruscan style, which have become remarkable on account of the elegant forms into which the various manufactures are shaped. This person has realised an original idea, and acquired great wealth and celebrity. He has chosen for his models every thing that Italy and Greece has left most perfect in its kind, and which we still admire in Florence, Rome and Naples. He possesses exact drawings of all the ancient sculptures which have been preserved from Gothic barbarity and the waste of time, and copies them with great exactness in his productions.

Of his vases, &c. some are gilded, others are enamelled. He employs a great number of workmen, and has acquired a considerable fortune.

It was in the year 1771, that Cox engaged in an extraordinary enterprise. He knew that the princes of Asia held our mechanical inventions in the highest estimation; he was aware, however, that nothing which was not adorned with gold, silver, and precious stones, had any attraction for them. Every thing of this kind which they have to ornament their palaces, are clumsy and very badly executed. His project therefore was to join the magic of art to the imposing appearance of riches. A considerable fortune added to a genius at once subtle and inventive, furnished him with the means.

The most skilful artists in England and France, such as jewellers, clock-makers, goldsmiths, &c. were employed, and paid to exert their utmost skill.

Every thing that they undertook was performed with uncommon care and ingenuity, and he soon beheld

beheld himself possessed of a number of mechanical inventions, unrivalled in point of excellence.

Cox was resolved to send this collection to Asia; he, however, kept it nine years in London, and shewed the whole by means of tickets, at half a guinea each. I myself have frequently seen it, and always with fresh admiration. Never was taste and grandeur, all the skill of mechanics, and the magic of optics, united in such a high degree of perfection. The eye met with nothing but gold, diamonds, and precious stones which were shaped into the forms of a variety of animals; assumed their gestures, and seemed to be alive; birds of different kinds and of exquisite plumage sung the most ravishing notes; the swan of Europe swam in artificial rivers; the hare and partridges ran about in groves, planted by the hands of the most cunning workmen; while camels, elephants, and other productions of Asia, stalked around, and imitated nature with a scrupulous exactitude.

But the most romantic object in all this astonishing assemblage, was a castle six feet in height: it seemed to realise all the idea which the imagination of the warmest poets, could conceive of a palace in fairy land.

This superb collection, in which the precious metals seemed to constitute the least valuable parts, cost more than a hundred thousand pounds. The present emperor of China received a similar one from Cox in 1759: it is placed by the side of his throne in the grand audience chamber at Pekin. That of which I speak was destined for the Great Mogul, but the enormous debts which the ingenious artist was obliged to contract, and of which the interest alone amounted to a great sum, unfortunately prevented him from completing his design. A part only was sent to the East, the rest was disposed of in London by means of a lottery. Thus

the hope of forming a new branch of trade with Asia was defeated perhaps for ever. From this, not only England, but other countries might have drawn the greatest advantages.

Doctor Graham, a Scotchman by birth, in the year 1780, by means of his Celestial Bed, which cost him several thousand pounds, gave at once a proof of the *wealth* and the *cullibility* of the English. He called his house the *Temple of Health*. He acted as the high priest of that puissant goddess; in this capacity he affirmed that he joined the useful to the agreeable, and all the wonders of art and the precious secrets of his profession. Nothing, indeed, could be more superb than this temple; the electric fluid managed with uncommon skill, as darted around in beautiful irradiation; transparent glass of various colours chosen and placed with taste; valuable vases filled with the most exquisite aromatics, which awakened and softened the passions, and inspired the soul with a soft langour, were the first objects that presented themselves to the observation of the curious.

This modern Esculapius had undoubtedly founded his scheme on a perfect knowledge of the human heart; and the success that crowned his strange enterprise proved that he was not wrong in his calculation. Indeed it could not fail to succeed, for I really think that the sensual pleasures are carried as far, not to say farther, in London than in Paris.

Graham put an end to this farce about two years after it commenced, by selling his grand electrical apparatus, his instruments of music, and, finally, his celestial bed.

Mrs. Abington, the celebrated actress, is engaged in a very singular occupation. As she possesses an exquisite taste, she is constantly employed in driving about the capital to give her advice

vice concerning the modes and fashions of the day. She is called in like a physician, and recompensed as if she were an artist. There never is a marriage or ball in which she is not consulted. A great number of people of fashion treat her in the most familiar manner and as if she were their equal. As she never appears on the stage but in the most elegant dress, her taste is sure to be copied by all the ladies who happen to be spectators. It is there that this priestess of the fashion displays all her art, being certain that she will be immediately copied with the most trivial exactness.

In the same manner that the philosophical disciples of antiquity imposed silence on the inconsiderate scholars, by observing, *our master has said thus*; so it is sufficient for the beauties of London to observe *Mrs. Abington has worn such a thing*, to shut the mouths of their fathers and their husbands. In her contract with the manager of Drury-lane in the year 1781, it was agreed that the sum of five hundred pounds sterling should be annually allowed for her wardrobe; besides this she received eighteen guineas every night that she acted, and a benefit at the end of the season.

In a city such as London, where so many weak people who happen to be affluent reside, it is not at all surprising that artful impostors should by means of tricks and stratagems endeavour to avail themselves of the wealth of these fools.

Every thing is thought fair as long as they do not transgress the laws; thus a number of quacks of every kind exercise their various professions in peace and security.

About twelve months since, a pation appeared in London who pretended to possess the secret of cutting the finger and toe nails, in a manner so as to render the hands and feet much more elegant and beautiful*.

Having

* This man advertised as a chiropedist.

Having thus appealed to female vanity, the English ladies were enraptured with the fascinating idea of becoming more lovely, and this fellow being continually employed, was enabled to reside in an elegant house, and keep a fine carriage. He lived in this manner for two whole years, got a great deal of money and at the end of that time suddenly disappeared, leaving debts behind him to the amount of three thousand pounds.

Another trade practised in London is that of begging. It is indeed very uncommon to see an Englishman who is not one of the very lowest of the people asking for charity, although foreigners of good birth, and who appear to have received a certain degree of education, exercise that shameful profession among them and subsist without much trouble. These do not stop people in the streets, where they would receive nothing but trifles, or at most a little silver. Being well dressed they get admittance into houses of people of distinction; shew proofs and documents, which for the most part are forged, and receive gold from the inhabitants, who are generally credulous and beneficent.

I knew an Italian, formerly in the theatre at St. Petersburg, who, although he could neither read nor write, after he had procured another rogue to draw up a patent for him, gave himself out as a Russian colonel. Provided with his false diploma, he entered with inconceivable impudence into the best houses in London, would not be stopped by any servant, penetrated into the inner apartments, and at last got sight of the master, and never quitted him without receiving a present.

It was in vain that the Russian minister discovered the roguery of this fellow; he could only inform a very small number of persons: the Italian still found out new benefactors, whom he imposed upon by means of his patent, and while he preserved it

it with care, it would have been very difficult to have punished him. After having practised similiar arts for three years, he left England with a considerable sum of money, and is at this present moment at Dunkirk.

A Frenchman had a still better plan. He pretended to be the son of the unfortunate Calas, who, as it is well known, lives in France, and is a physician. The general compassion for this unfortunate family opened every door in London to him; he received considerable presents, and departed with great wealth.

This trade so singularly lucrative in that country, had so many attractions for a M. de Chambrigny, formerly a colonel in the service of France, and who arrived in London soon after the German war, that he reduced it to a system, and followed the profession with the most uncommon success. He never went on foot but (is it to be believed?) in a brilliant equipage that belonged to him, and very often the most elegant entertainments. As he possessed a knowledge of the world, he knew how to exercise his skill with so much success, that even those persons who passed for misers, opened their purses to him without any difficulty. To the few who hesitated to make him those presents which he requested, he presented a new history of England, which he was about to write, and of which he actually printed one or two volumes.

The generous and compassionate character of the English joined to the disgust so natural in man to industry, occasions all the streets of London to be crowded with beggars. These lazy wretches receive three, four, and sometimes five shillings a day in charity. They actually have their clubs in the parish of St. Giles's where they meet to carouse, read the gazettes, and talk about politics. No one dares to attend those assemblies unless he is a beggar himself.

himself, or introduced by one. A friend of mine who wished to see and converse with all descriptions of men, having one day put on a ragged coat, promised to reward a mendicant if he would conduct him thither. He was accordingly introduced, found a great deal of gaiety and ease, and nothing that bore the appearance of indigence, save the tatters that covered the members. One cast his crutches into a corner of the room; one unbuckled his wooden leg; another took off the plaister which concealed his eye; all, in fine discovered themselves in their own natural forms; recounted the adventures of that day, and concerted the stratagems to be put in execution on the morrow.

The female beggars generally hire infants from those who are poorer than themselves, to rouse, by that means, the charity of the passengers. They pay various prices for these children, from sixpence to two shillings a day, according as they are more or less deformed. A child that is very crooked and distorted generally earns three shillings, and sometimes even more. I happened once to overhear the conversation of two women who were talking concerning their profession. One of them informed the other that she paid two shillings for the child in her arms: "What!" replies her companion, "are you a fool? Two shillings for that charming baby!—I would not give more for a monster."

In the same parish the pick-pockets hold their meetings, and have an ordinary which they frequent, where they sell or exchange the handkerchiefs, snuff-boxes and other articles which they have filched in the course of the day. In any other country these associations would be discovered, and the whole gang made prisoners: this is not, however, possible in London; for as these rogues never act in a body, but each by himself, it is necessary that there should be proofs against every

E

individual,

individual, for the laws are scrupulously observed in arresting the most despicable wretch in the community. When any one of them is suspected, his person must be sworn to; and his companions, although well known, never run any risk whatever.

This class of rogues, however, do not now assemble so publicly as formerly. About thirty years since a house in St. Giles's became very celebrated as the rendezvous of this kind of thieves; at present it is occupied by an honest brewer. The knives and forks were chained to the table, and the cloth nailed to it. Not far from that place was also a shop famous for gin: over the door of which was the following inscription: "*Here you may get drunk for a penny, dead drunk for two-pence, and have straw for nothing.*"

This singular liquor was sold in a cellar, which was crowded day and night with a species of beings who rather resemble beasts than men. A statute however, called the *Gin act*, by imposing a high duty on that liquid poison, put an end to such horrid dissoluteness. It is necessary I should remark here, that the description I have just given does not exhibit a picture of the capital during the present times, and that I have only spoken of an obscure street which has been distinguished for ages, by the poverty and the gross and savage character of the wretches who reside in it.

London still contains those pretended fortune-tellers, who for the moderate sum of one shilling, augur a happy destiny to the curious. Their lodgings are usually adorned with magical characters, and furnished with celestial and terrestrial globes. Their dress is a green robe, a fur night-cap, and a long beard tied under the chin. These for the most part are young men, but, by means of this dress, they assume the appearance of old age,

and pretend to be arrived from the East. That they may not be supposed to know a word of English, they make use of an interpreter, to give an air of truth to their imposture, who explains the meaning of the oracle to the dupes, and shares the spoils with his master. These fortune-tellers are always English or Irish, for as yet no foreigner has dared to make such an attempt.

This kind of imposition is severely punished, but neither so often nor so severely as to abolish it entirely. As the public peace is not endangered by the practice; as no bad consequences follow their ridiculous predictions; as fortune-tellers at bottom are only a kind of beggars; and as fools in all countries are determined to be deceived; from thence it proceeds that they do not prosecute these people with any degree of rigour, unless they become too public, and make a prodigious noise.

Sometimes they carry their impudence to such a length, that they advertise in the newspapers, and inform the world of their abilities, their price, and their abode. If a magistrate should go to the place appointed, they deny the whole, and affirm that some wag has done it to amuse himself at their expence. On these occasions they easily manage so as to hide their robe, cap, globes, and in a word, every indication of their profession; so that not finding any proofs sufficient to convict them, the officers of justice are obliged to retire, and the fortune-teller continues his trade in peace.

CHAPTER IV.

*Extent of London—Contrast betwixt the City and the West
End of the Town—Peculiarities in the Houses and Pub-
lic Buildings—The Pavement—Assurance of Houses—
Is London well lighted?—St. Paul's—Westminster Abbey
—Anecdote of Charles I.—Adelphi—Mansion House—
Bridges—The Bank—City Magistrates—Patriotism
of Mr. Beckford.*

THIRTY years ago it was difficult to ascertain whether London or Paris was the largest city. Since, however, they have prescribed certain bounds to the latter, which they are not allowed to exceed, and this wise regulation has not yet been adopted in the metropolis of England, which every day receives a new increase of buildings; it cannot now be doubted that the English have the misfortune to possess a capital infinitely more extensive than the French. That which adds not a little to its magnitude, is the great number of large villages, which serve as country houses; and which being incorporated as it were with the suburbs of the town, form with it a monstrous aggregate, to which there are neither limits nor regulations. No less than forty-three thousand new houses were built, between 1762 and 1779.

Some enlightened patriots have attempted to stop this evil, which is continually increasing. "It is madness," say they, "thus to roof all the county of Middlesex with tiles." The sagacious North thought proper to impose a duty on bricks; but far from attaining the end proposed, the rage for building seemed only to increase. The projectors were

not

not in the least frightened with this tax: being certain of always finding inhabitants, they only became anxious to make their houses more agreeable and commodious than formerly.

For these twenty years past, an actual emigration has taken place from the eastern parts of London towards the western; thousands have left the former, where they do not erect new buildings, for the latter, where the most fertile fields and most agreeable gardens are daily metamorphosed into houses and streets.

The city, especially the houses along the banks of the Thames, is composed of old ruins: the streets are narrow, obscure, and badly paved: it is the residence of the seamen, of the workmen employed in ship-building, and of a great part of the Jews who reside in London. The contrast betwixt that and the western parts of the metropolis is astonishing: the houses there are almost all new, and of an excellent construction; the squares are magnificent; the streets are built in straight lines, and perfectly well lighted: no city in Europe is better paved. If London were equally well built, no place in the whole world would be comparable to it.

It is a singular circumstance, and one that no traveller has ever remarked; that the western division of London, which is in extent more than half the capital, and which is entirely separated from the city, has not as yet received any name. When the citizens speak of any particular part of it, they content themselves with mentioning the name of the street; and when they talk of the whole, they term it—*the other end of the town*. Foreigners and geographers do wrong in calling this prodigious assemblage of streets and squares Westminster; that district does not form a tenth of it; all the rest is included in that of Middlesex.

As every thing in that country is singular, it is not in the least surprising that the capital should be placed in different counties, and each particular portion of it has a distinct jurisdiction.

The city, which is the smallest division of London, has its own magistrates; all the rest is governed by justices of the peace, which gives occasion to a remarkable difference in the *police*. In the former it is more severe and exact; the love of order and industry is also more perceptible.

Two towns, a hundred leagues distant from each other, cannot have less resemblance than there is between the city and the other parts of London: the form of government; the regulations; the privileges; the taste and arrangement of the houses; the manner of living; every thing, in one word, renders this difference remarkable.

The citizens are represented in parliament by four members, whom they alone elect; the other inhabitants of the metropolis, according to the districts which they inhabit, vote for Middlesex, Surry, Kent, and Westminster.

During the fire in 1666, thirty thousand four hundred houses, eighty-seven churches, and twenty-six hospitals in the city were consumed by the flames. Of this terrible devastation no trace now remains; but as every person was anxious to rebuild his dwelling-house, necessity made them neglect to make the buildings either regular or convenient. From thence proceed the number of ill-formed masses of brick and mortar, dark and without taste; the crooked and narrow streets, and the obscure situation of the churches and other public edifices: faults which have been carefully avoided in the western parts of the capital.

The churches eastward of Temple Bar are heaped upon one another; they have all been rebuilt on their ancient foundations; and one would imagine,
from

from their number, that London was formerly composed of chapels and convents. West of Temple Bar, on the other hand, there are very few: the zeal to lodge themselves seems more to have influenced the inhabitants, than the desire to erect places of worship for the Deity: in some parts, there are six thousand houses to one parish church.

The shops are open by eight o'clock every morning in the city; all is then in motion, every body is at work; while on the other hand, at the *court end* of the town, the streets are empty, the houses shut, and even the very domestics are asleep; the sound of coaches is not heard, and one seems to walk about in a place that has been deserted. This difference, which extends to drinking and eating, amusements, dress, and manner of expression; occasions a kind of hatred between the inhabitants of each. Those in the city charge the people who live at the west end of the town with luxury, idleness, effeminacy, and an attachment to French fashions; while the others speak of a citizen as a dull, fat animal, who places all his merits in his strong box.

But it is more especially when the lord mayor, sheriffs and common council have an audience at St. James's to present a petition, or compliment his majesty on some great event, that the courtiers attempt to ridicule them. One may easily imagine that a simple tradesman totally unacquainted with the modes and customs of a court, will not be able to acquit himself on such solemn occasions with the ease of a courtier, who has made *etiquette* his chief and his only study, and who looks upon it as the most interesting and the most useful of all accomplishments.

This antipathy is so notorious, that it is mentioned in ballads, noticed on the stage, and is not forgotten even in the Parliament itself. In Italy they

would arm themselves with poignards, and spill each others' blood on a similar occasion;—but so far from being attended with fatal consequences in England, it serves only to banish the *spleen* of the nation.

The English nobility generally live three quarters of the year in the country. This ancient custom of staying but a short time in the capital, is the reason why there are so few magnificent mansions in London. It is observed, however, that the metropolis having lately acquired more attractions, people of distinction now reside there longer than they were wont to do: however, they still look on their country seats as their principal habitations.

Many families who have twenty thousand a year, have but a few apartments in town, and, as they keep a prodigious train of servants, are of course confined in regard to room. In a short time this inconvenience will no longer exist, as a number of people of fashion are now building superb palaces.

It may be thought that this custom is encouraged by government; but although the chief design of all courts be, to draw around them the greater part of the nobility to add to their splendour, and take away from them the power of raising disturbances in the provinces; I am, however, of opinion, that nothing but the pleasures of the metropolis influence the English.

The nation already begins to be less attached to hunting, and to feel a greater passion for the fine arts; and every thing that can add to the pleasures of a sensual life. It is also certain, that the next generation of the nobility will reside, like these of France, entirely in the capital. When one considers that, since this custom has prevailed, those commotions which the great used formerly to foment, have altogether subsided; and that in England and Poland alone, where the nobility reside on their estates, disturbances of this kind have happened

in the present age; it must be allowed that luxury, against which so much declamation prevails, has been attended with at least some good consequences.

This new inclination, by which the wealthy are induced to live in London, has given to projectors the idea of building large streets, and extensive squares, adorned with excellent houses. These houses, which may be regarded as so many palaces, are very lofty, exceedingly commodious, and have each of them two stories under ground, to which sufficient light is communicated, by means of a fore-court. The servants are lodged, and the kitchen, store-rooms, &c. are placed there, so that the rest of the house is entirely at the disposal of the master.

The builders have generally a lease of ninety-nine years, and at the end of that term are obliged either to give up the premises, or renew the agreement on paying a fine. The duke of Portland has eight thousand buildings erected in this manner on his estate in the neighbourhood of town.

It is to this custom that the want of solidity in the houses, and the few master-pieces of architecture which we meet with in London, may be fairly attributed. If this reason did not exist, rich individuals would glory in decorating the capital of their native country. However, the disadvantage is in a great measure recompensed by the commodiousness of the buildings.

Every house is abundantly supplied with water, by means of pipes, which distribute it to all the streets in London. This profusion is of the greatest use in case of fire, by placing the engines so as to receive a constant supply. One need never be afraid of scarcity of this precious commodity; for, not contented with making the Thames to run through all parts of the town, they have brought the New River from the county of Hertford for the

same purpose. By means of engines at London-bridge they raise the river to a prodigious height, and then circulate it through wooden pipes.

They are careful in England not only to insure their houses and their shops, but even public buildings, such as churches, hospitals, and theatres. This precaution is not used in Paris, notwithstanding its boasted regulations are raised to the skies. Any one may also insure his goods and wardrobe; nay, every thing but his ready money. This excellent establishment is however, sometimes abused: more than one rogue has burnt his own house; and as this kind of crime is very difficult to be proved, the office is generally obliged to pay the amount of the demand. Immediately after the fire, the assurers become entitled to their money, having first transmitted the amount of their losses, and attested the statement by an oath. Notwithstanding the number of houses annually consumed in London by the flames, a mere trifle is given for the risk: it is usually no more than in the proportion of half a crown for a hundred pounds.

No part of Europe exhibits such luxury and magnificence as the English display within the walls of their dwelling houses. The staircase, which is covered with the richest carpets, is supported by a balustrade of the finest India wood, curiously constructed, and lighted by lamps containing crystal vases. The landing-places are adorned with busts, pictures and medallions; the wainscot and cielings of the apartments are covered with the finest varnish, and enriched with gold, bass-reliefs, and the most happy attempts in painting and sculpture. The chimneys are of Italian marble, on which flowers and figures, cut in the most exquisite stile, form the chief ornaments; the locks of doors are of steel damasked with gold. Carpets which often cost three hundred pounds a piece, and which one

scruples

scruples to touch with his foot, cover all the rooms; the richest stuffs from the looms of Asia are employed as window curtains; and the clocks and watches with which the apartments are furnished, astonish by their magnificence, and the ingenious complication of their mechanism.

The English have also introduced a new species of sculpture; this consists in medallions of ivory, of which the workmanship is equally delicate and elegant. These are placed upon black velvet covered with glass, and contained in a frame of the richest workmanship.

The present fashion of adorning the capital by the magnificence and the luxury of their mansions, every day increases among the great, and perhaps will at last destroy a custom, of which the lovers of painting and sculpture have so long complained; that of embellishing their country-houses with all the wonders of art; and which, thus entombed in the heart of a remote province, are for ever lost to the world. Where is the artist who has time and money sufficient to sacrifice them in searching for a production which he may not perhaps find; or which if he does meet with after a long and painful search, he can only view in a transitory manner, without studying its beauties at his ease?

Exclusive of St. Pauls' cathedral and the collegiate church of Westminster, London contains one hundred and two parish-churches and sixty-nine chapels of the established religion; twenty-one belonging to the French protestants; eleven to the Germans, Dutch, and Swedes; thirty-three to the anabaptists and quakers; twenty-six to the independants: twenty-eight to the presbyterians; nineteen to the catholics; and three to the jews; the number consecrated to the worship of the Divinity is three hundred and forty edifices. In this account I do not include twenty-one churches which do not

not belong to any particular parish. The foregoing list was ascertained in 1779: I make this remark, because the anabaptists, quakers, &c. &c. augment, diminish, and often change the house where they assemble.

No city is adorned with such fine squares as London. They are all composed of noble and handsome houses: there are neither shops nor warehouses to be seen in them: in the centre there is usually a piece of ground laid out in a beautiful manner, which serves as an agreeable walk. Some are adorned with statues and obelisks. Markets, so common in other capitals, never disgrace them with their disgusting appearance. The squares in London offer such objects to the eye as announce the opulence and good taste of the inhabitants: those who reside there, besides, have the advantage of breathing a pure air, and are never disturbed by any noise.

The markets in the metropolis, which are very numerous have certain fixed stations where neither the buyers nor sellers need fear being run over by the wheels of carriages, or trampled upon by the hoofs of horses, being, by means of their situation, secured from such inconveniences. This regulation, which is the consequence of an excellent *police*, ought to be adopted in every great town.

Among the peculiarities of London may be reckoned the pavement and the lamps. About twenty years since, that metropolis was the worst paved city in Europe; the evil was indeed felt, but the inhabitants did not then know how to remedy it. From almost every house an enormous *sign* was suspended, which darkened the streets, often fell down and sometimes killed the passengers. Two acts of parliament appeared almost at the same time, and obviated these disadvantages; the signs disappeared, and the streets of London were covered with a pavement

ment unrivalled in its kind, and which cost four hundred pounds sterling.

By means of large foot ways of hewn stone, the passengers, without being incommoded by the horses and carriages, pass freely along. No coachman under the penalty of twenty shillings, dares to drive upon this, or touch the *kirb stone*, even if he is obliged to wait whole hours. Considerable sums are appropriated towards the repairing of these excellent foot-ways; a regulation at once singular and wise, prevents the pavement from being hurt, as the carts, waggons, &c. are now obliged to make use of wheels with rims six inches in diameter. These, so far from hurting the streets, make them more firm, and in a certain degree repair the damages which the chariots, coaches, and other light carriages have occasioned.

As the English are prodigal of their money and their time in favour of every public establishment, one may naturally expect to find that London is well lighted. Nothing indeed, can be more superb. The lamps, which often consist of two, or three, and sometimes four branches, are enclosed in crystal globes, and being attached to iron supporters, are placed at a small distance from each other. They are lighted at sunset, both in winter and summer, as well when the moon shines as not. In Oxford-street alone, there are more lamps than in all Paris.

The great roads within seven or eight miles of town are also illuminated in the same manner; and as they are very numerous, the effect is charming, more especially in the county of Surry, where they frequently cross each other obliquely, and at right angles. The highways are for the most part bordered with palisades and country houses; little wooden boxes provided with bells, and containing watchmen armed with musquets, are also posted at every hundred paces.

As

As all shops are open till ten o'clock at night, and exceedingly well lighted: this, together with the lamps in the streets, has a most astonishing effect. The prince of Monaco, after the demise of the late duke of York, who died in his territories, went to England on an invitation from the king. It being rather late when he arrived, his highness imagined that this brilliant illumination was made in honour to him, for he thought it impossible that the inhabitants could always support such an immense expence. The prince's mistake was soon divulged, and occasioned many pleasantries.

From what has been said above, it may be easily imagined that London contains many fine houses, and very few *palaces*. But notwithstanding, it is not customary among the English to give this appellation to Burlington, Northumberland and Somerset Houses, the latter of which is a superb edifice, and has lately been erected at the expence of the nation; it is, however, certain, that all these buildings are on every account worthy of being stiled so. This custom perhaps arises from that *spirit of equality*, which constitutes the chief pride of the nation. It is only the residence of sovereigns that they dignify with the name of a palace; every other edifice, however large and however superb, whether it belong to the king's brother or even the prince of Wales, is simply called a house.

The most noble works in architecture contained in London, are the churches, the bridges, the hospitals, and some other public edifices.

The cathedral of S. Paul's is not unworthy of the nation. Notwithstanding all its faults, it would be much more admired if the site, concealing its proper point of view from the spectators, did not at the same time hide all its beauties. It is generally known that it was built after the model of St. Peter's at Rome, and yet it only resembles it in its shape and dome.

dome. The front towards Ludgate-hill is more superb, and has an effect infinitely more interesting than St. Peter's: it wants, however, the admirable situation, the colonade, the *jet d'eau* and the obelisk of the latter.

There are a great number of engravings of the design after which Sir Cristopher Wren, the architect, intended to have executed this building. His plan was in the purest Grecian style; and if his advice had been followed, London might now boast the glory of possessing the master-piece of modern architecture. The consent of the chapter of St. Paul's being unfortunately necessary on this occasion, they rejected the idea, observing at the same time, "That such an edifice would rather resemble a Pagan temple than a Christian church."

There is no other example of a single architect having begun and executed a building of such an astonishing immensity. It was the labour of thirty-seven years, and cost a million two hundred thousand pounds sterling.

Divine service is celebrated in only a small part of it; all the rest is empty, and without any ornament, which has a very disagreeable effect. It is at last perceived how much this superb edifice suffers by its sad and doleful vacuity; for which reason they have for some time past formed the design of furnishing it with monuments to the memory of illustrious Englishmen. In consequence of this project, the king was petitioned by the common council of London, in the year 1778, to permit the monument to be placed there, which the parliament had voted to the memory of lord Chatham. The minister, who wished as much as possible to detract from the reputation of that great statesman, did not choose to acquiesce in the demand; the funeral trophies were therefore banished into one of the most obscure corners of Westminster abbey, where
the

the effect is entirely lost. The sculpture has also been confided to an artist who is but little known. If the minister had acceded to the proposition of the citizens, St. Paul's would have been insensibly filled with the noblest memorials of national glory.

The church or abbey of Westminster is, perhaps the most beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture now in existence. The grandeur of its columns, the boldness of its arches, its immense extent, its ornaments and their distribution, taken altogether, make this a most extraordinary edifice. It was formerly a convent of Benedictines; Cromwell converted it into a stable for his cavalry. In no part of the world is such a multitude of superb monuments to be met with; for, notwithstanding the prodigious space within the walls, in a few years there will not be room for any more.

This is the burial-place of the Kings of England, and of many celebrated men, to whom either their friends or the nation at large have erected memorials. If any place is capable of inspiring holy awe and religious terror, it is this. This spot is also sacred to men of letters and the most famous poets; here the man of genius elevated and inflamed at the sight, beholds the most celebrated names of which the world can boast. It is here too that the monuments of the statesman, the general, the admiral, the philosopher, the poet, the man of learning, and the artist, touch one another.

The tomb of Newton is finely executed, and placed in an excellent situation; on the base you read the following sentence: "Mortals, rejoice that you once possessed this ornament of human nature!" The inscription, which is in the Latin language, was preferred to the English epitaph, written by Pope, which, although exaggerated, is noble and poetical:

Nature,

Nature, and Nature's laws, lay hid in night;
 God said—Let Newton be! and all was light!

There are also many foreigners of distinguished merit buried here. The tombs of St. Evremond and Handel are truly admirable; that of Handel in particular is reckoned by the connoisseurs to be the most beautiful and ingenious one in the whole abbey. The English never esteemed any stranger so much as him; it is not therefore astonishing that they should raise such a magnificent tribute to his memory. The idea is sublime: Handel, awakened by a trumpet blown by an angel, starts from his tomb: a sentiment of religious terror is not what agitates his soul at that moment: the sounds of the trumpet fix all his attention; his arms, which he elevates, his ear, with which he listens, every feature in his countenance seems to indicate, that, entranced in this celestial harmony, his soul is unable to attend to any thing else.

The inscription beneath the bust of Shakespeare, is taken from a fine passage in one of his dramatic pieces called "The Tempest:"

The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
 Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve;
 And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
 Leave not a wreck behind.

Gay so celebrated on account of his Fables, has the following lines on his tomb:

Life is but a jest, and all things shew it:
 I thought so once, but now I know it.

These monuments, erected to the *manes* of great men, and which have eternized the very artists employed

played in them, form a spectacle equally impressive and magnificent. England is undoubtedly the country in Europe where learning is most nobly recompensed: it is this sentiment which has been expressed with so much truth and propriety by Engel on the tomb of Lessing.

Wenn er ein Teut scher nicht, wenn er ein Britte waere,
So schlosse seinen sarg die Grust der Koenge ein.
So wurd ein Volk, gefuhlvoll fur die Ehre,
Ihm oeffentlich ein ewig Denkmel weihn.

"If he had been an Englishman, instead of a German, his body would have been entombed among kings. A nation to whom honour is so dear, would have erected a monument to his memory at the public expence, and rendered his name immortal!"

Westminster abbey also contains the bodies of many sovereigns; among others are the monuments of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. Their successors have not been equally honoured. Elizabeth herself has only a simple epitaph. Instead of sculpture, they have of late adopted the singular and childish custom of placing a portrait in wax over the grave, which becomes hideous at the end of a few years,

In the reign of queen Anne the parliament granted four thousand pounds sterling for the repairing of this church.

This is the place, to recount a singular anecdote, to which the best English historians, although they were too prudent to declare it on account of the honour of the nation, are yet nevertheless said to have given credit.

If we are to believe tradition, the body of the unfortunate Charles I. was immediately after decollation buried in the chapel of Windsor castle; it is still said to remain in a vault under the choir, of which no one either does know, or at least chooses to own

the situation. This strange ignorance of such a remarkable circumstance, and which leaves so much to supposition, is an argument in favour of what I am about to relate.

It is asserted, that some royalists conveyed in the most secret manner the remains of their sovereign from Windsor to Westminster abbey. On the restoration of Charles II. the supposed body of Cromwell was dug up, dragged through the streets, and exposed on a gallows. Now it is pretended that, either through a mistake, or a concerted design, this was actually the corpse of Charles I. which experienced this ignominious usage; for when, in the presence of an innumerable crowd of spectators, the executioner was about to cut off the head, to his utter astonishment, he found the ceremony had been already performed.

The more modern churches in London are built with a considerable share of state; but I shall only mention St. Martin's, the front of which is an imitation of the Pantheon at Rome. The connoisseurs, however, are much disgusted to see in all of them steeples and belfries, instead of domes, which are so much more majestic. A metropolis possessed of such immense riches, and which boasts of, perhaps two of the best architects in Europe*, ought to excel in this species of buildings.

Adams has erected towards the Thames a pile of buildings, called the Adelphi, which, on account of their convenience and situation, may be quoted as models. All the houses are built on arches, whose grandeur and solidity deserve to be compared to those magnificent common sewers which at this very day are accounted among the wonders of ancient Rome.

Many of the English, with great propriety, imagine that, if the present king had a taste for architecture,

* Mr. Adams and Sir William Chambers.

chitecture, and would use his powerful influence in raising palaces and other public buildings worthy of the nation, London would actually become the most superb city in Europe.

It is extremely probable that, if the unfortunate American war had not taken place, and the flourishing trade of these proud islanders had continued, in twenty years time their capital would have excited the jealousy of all the surrounding nations.

The Mansion-house, where the chief magistrate of the city resides during his mayoralty, ought also to be mentioned. It was built about half a century ago, at a period when the English were not initiated in the fine arts. The common council being assembled on purpose to examine the plans laid before them for this edifice, a nobleman who had been in Italy sent them a design of Palladio's which he had brought with him from that country; and which as they were determined to spare no expence, was by its elegance and grandeur peculiarly adapted for the purpose.

These respectable citizens, however, were entirely unacquainted with Palladio; they desired to know who he was, and wanted very much to see and converse with him. After a long debate, an alderman observed, Palladio was a foreigner who had been dead for some years, and that it would be exceedingly ridiculous to execute the plan of a stranger, when London produced so many excellent architects.

After this he proposed a ship-carpenter, who was immediately accepted without any difficulty.

This man accordingly planned and executed the building, as may be easily seen at the first glance; for the front exactly resembles the *stern of a man of war*. The apartments are obscure and badly distributed, and the stairs, which look like *ladders*, are very ill contrived. It is in this edifice, which taken altogether has nothing absolutely disagreeable in its appearance

appearance, that the lord mayor is obliged to reside, notwithstanding he may have a house of his own in the neighbourhood.

The beauty and grandeur of the three principal bridges across the Thames, are a high proof of the wealth of the nation, and of its passion for great enterprises. I should blush to compare the *Pont Neuf* and *Pont Royal* at Paris to those of Westminster and Blackfriars. An Englishman is proud, but he is not a boaster; we therefore hear but little of these masterpieces of architecture, which by their grandeur, magnificence, and conveniency, are the first works of this kind that are to be found in Europe, I will not even except the Rialto at Venice; for the unpolished blocks of marble with which it is composed, have nothing magnificent in their appearance. Even the single arch of which it consists, and which is so famous on account of its grandeur and extent, has been rivalled in Great Britain by a bridge across the Don, in Ayrshire, the two extremities of which are placed on the opposite banks of the river, and are 90 feet distant from each other. The span of the Rialto is exactly of the same dimensions.

The new bridges at London are equally grand and commodious. That of Westminster is 1223 feet long, and 44 broad. It is extremely well paved; the sides are adorned with stone balustrades; the foot-paths are broad; the lamps are numerous, and the alcoves, placed at proper distances, shelter the passengers from the rain. It has fifteen arches; the centre one of which is 66 feet in width; they are all adorned with columns, and remarkable well vaulted.

This immense pile, which was twelve years in building, cost one hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

The prodigious expence did not, however, prevent them from immediately laying the foundation of another, called Blackfriars, which is placed in the
centre

centre of the city, and joins it to the county of Surry. It is still more elegant and magnificent than that of Westminster. Its arches are adorned with columns of the Ionic order, and placed two and two; their bases touch the river, and have a fine effect. This bridge was entirely constructed at the expence of the citizens, and cost one hundred and sixty thousand pounds, which was repaid by means of a toll on carriages, horses, and foot passengers.

Some years since another was projected, betwixt the two new ones: the execution, however, of this has been deferred.

Notwithstanding London bridge is a very good one, yet it is nothing comparable to the others. The solidity of it however (for it was built more than 800 years since), gives us a favourable idea of the ancient manner of building. Its arches are low, and very narrow: circumstances which, together with the rapidity of the stream, occasion many accidents.

Formerly this bridge was covered with houses, like *Notre Dame* at Paris.

Near to this stands a column of the Doric order, commonly called the *Monument*; it was built to perpetuate the memory of the fire by which London suffered so severely in the year 1666. Being erected in the very place where the conflagration began, all its beauty is lost by the badness of its situation. It is two hundred feet perpendicular, and consequently exceeds in height that of Trajan at Rome; it has like it a winding stair-case in the inside. The sum appropriated to its erection was thirty thousand pounds sterling.

As its fall is continually apprehended, and would be attended with the most fatal consequences, it has been often proposed to remove this immense quarry of stone.

The

The Royal exchange and the Bank ought not to be forgotten. The exchange is not the largest, but it is certainly the most magnificent in the world. It is decorated with the statues of the kings of Great Britain, and surrounded by a prodigious number of coffee-houses, where the merchants transact their business. Its situation is extremely convenient, being only a few steps from the Post-office, the Mansion-house Guildhall, the India-house, &c. &c. &c.

Although the bank is only one story high, it is nevertheless a fine building. Most of the apartments are lighted from the top, and the stoves are contrived with so much art, that neither the door nor, the tunnel can be perceived; each of these cost a hundred pounds sterling. As the bank is the property of the nation, all the offices in this immense edifice are open to every one; in the outer hall, there are tables on which pens, ink, &c. are placed for even the lowest of the populace, although they may have no business there. However trivial these little circumstances may appear to some people, I cannot but admire even in them that republican spirit which animates the whole nation.

The shops and warehouses, which join each other, and sometimes extend for a whole mile without interruption, strike a foreigner with surprise. The part towards the street generally consists of a bow-window and a glass door through which every article that is elegant and fashionable may be seen, arranged in the utmost symmetry.

Mathematical instruments, and every thing curious in that science, which for rarity and perfection are not to be surpassed in the palaces of princes, appear in abundance. Nothing can be more superb than the silver-smiths' shops. In looking at the prodigious quantity of plate piled up and exposed there, one can only form a proper idea of the riches of the nation.

nation. The greatest shops in *St. Honore* at Paris, appear contemptible when compared with those in London. I have seen in Cheapside (and it is a well known fact) a warehouse of this kind, the contents of which were estimated at a hundred thousand pounds sterling.

The print-shops are actually so many galleries of painting. To the number of privileges enjoyed by these islanders may be added that of publishing *caricatures*, which ridicule the occurrences of the times.

The French compose songs; the Dutch, of a duller cast, strike medals; but the English have chosen *engravings* as the most proper vehicle for their satire. In 1784, when Mr. Fox carried every thing before him in the House of Commons, he was represented sitting at a mirror which reflected the picture of Oliver Cromwell.

The government of the city is an exact copy in miniature of that of the whole kingdom. Like the latter, it is divided into three distinct branches; the lord mayor represents the king; the court of aldermen the House of Peers, and the common council the House of Commons. The latter are chosen by the *livery*, who form a body of nine thousand citizens. There are no emoluments attached to the rank of alderman; it is the honour, the influence, and the hope of becoming the chief magistrate, which makes that situation desirable. However if the office of alderman is not lucrative, no expence is entailed on the execution of it;—but that of a sheriff often amount to two or three thousand pounds sterling in a single year.

When Wilkes was appointed to this office, his friends subscribed the necessary sums. This being the first step towards the mayoralty, the court employed every artifice to prevent him, but in vain. As the influence of the minister is very trifling in the corporation,

corporation, it so happens that the citizens of London are not very much in favour at St. James's: they, however, console themselves with the best grace in the world. They repeat with great pleasure a witty expression made use of by one of their body, in the reign of Charles II. That monarch being greatly discontented with the citizens, who would not consent to *lend* him certain sums to support his foolish dissipation, one day menaced a deputation who presented him an address, with the threat of leaving London and keeping his court at Oxford. An alderman on this occasion, turning towards a courtier, observed, "That the king seemed to be in a great passion." "I hope, however," adds he, "that when his majesty resolves he will not carry the river Thames along with him." This sally had its proper effect, and no English monarch has ever since thought proper to express a similar intention.

No person can become a liveryman of London without being admitted into one of the twenty-six companies, of which that body consists. A member whose name is registered in any of these, may aspire to the first employment in the capital, notwithstanding he may be one of the very dregs of the people; such as a taylor, a blacksmith, &c. &c. When princes and people of quality are presented with the freedom of the city of London, they are always requested to name their *trade*; and it is generally that of the lord mayor that is fixed upon. The present king of Denmark is a member of the goldsmiths' company.

The lord-mayor sits every day at the mansion-house to distribute justice, which he does without appeal in trifling disputes; in matters of greater consequence the culprit is sent to prison, and takes his trial in the usual manner.

If the chief magistrate for a moment should depart from the line of conduct prescribed to him by the laws, he is obliged to submit to justice like one of the meanest citizens.

As there are no justices of the peace in the city, the aldermen supply their place, and settle petty differences. Like all other magistrates, they are obliged to release a prisoner on giving bail, except in the cases of high-treason and felony.

The office of lord-mayor is not only very honorable, but has also a considerable revenue annexed to it. The citizens look upon him as their king. The number of his attendants, his equipages, and his rich liveries, give a certain degree of splendour to his dignity. He is addressed by the title of "My Lord," even by the sovereign. A prodigious number of privileges are attached to his office. The military cannot enter the city without his permission, nor can any seaman be impressed there, unless he backs the warrant. He is also conservator of the Thames.

The principal part of his revenue proceeds from the sale of places that become vacant during his mayoralty. It is always customary, on entering upon his charge, to give a great entertainment, which concludes with a ball: all the nobility are invited on the occasion; very few, however, attend.

It is very uncommon to see the same person twice lord mayor. William Beckford, however, who to uncommon knowledge and great patriotism united a revenue of thirty thousand a year, was for the second time invested with this dignity in 1769. He was consequently in that office in 1770, the time when the city, and a great number of the English counties, petitioned the sovereign to call a new parliament; for that had, by its conduct in regard to Wilkes, entirely lost the favour of the public:

but

but the king who thought it his interest to continue it, constantly refused the request. The city of London, however, reiterated their complaints; and the lord-mayor, the sheriffs, and common council were continually going to St. James's, where his majesty, according to custom, received them on the throne; the answer, however, was uniformly the same, viz. "That the king was content with his parliament; but, as he always should esteem it a pleasure to attend to the solicitations of his people, that he would consider of their petition, &c. &c."

Beckford, who was disgusted at being obliged, on account of his situation, to act the first character in this farce, secretly resolved to treat the affair in a more serious manner.

In consequence of this, he repairs with a numerous train to court, reads the petition, and receives the usual reply. It is then the custom, after kissing his majesty's hand, to retire; but Beckford, who had not gone there on account of a ceremony so little conformable to the genius of a free people, turned towards the king, and addressed him again in a speech delivered with the most profound respect, but at the same time with the most undaunted firmness, beseeching his majesty "not to treat the petition of the first city in his kingdom with so much indifference, but to yield to the continual solicitations of his people."

This address was not only unexpected, but even without example. I myself was one of the spectators, and I confess that I never in my whole life have been witness to such an extraordinary affair. The confusion and dismay of the courtiers were perceptible in their countenances, while the citizens shewed in the most unequivocal manner, that the courage of their chief magistrate gave them the highest satisfaction.

In the mean time Mr. Beckford stood before them, and with the utmost tranquillity expected the royal answer. As the king, however, was not *prepared*, a profound silence reigned for some minutes in the audience chamber, during which the spectators appeared mute and stupified. At last the lord-mayor, thinking it time to put an end to such a strange scene, bowed and departed.

One may easily imagine how much they were disgusted with this conduct at St. James's, where they termed it impudent, and threatened to commit his Lordship to the Tower: in the city, however, he was presented with the thanks of the corporation, which were accompanied with the most flattering marks of regard and esteem.

Being obliged eight days afterwards to return to St. James's to congratulate his majesty on the safe delivery of the queen, the lord chamberlain, after having mentioned his former behaviour, informed him at the same time, that a repetition of such a conduct would occasion the city of London to be deprived of the privilege of presenting their petitions to the king *while sitting on the throne*.

Beckford on this requested that the declaration might be given him in writing; and, on the refusal of the chamberlain, observed, that he should consider such a menace as if it had not been uttered.

This great patriot happened to die a few months afterwards, the city of London erected a monument to his memory in Guildhall. It is of white marble, and as large as the life. He is dressed in his robes; stands in the same position as when replying to his majesty's answer; and, instead of an inscription, the speech itself is engraven on the pedestal.

It is not at all uncommon to see an orator turn towards this statue, invoke the *manes* of Beckford, and conjure his fellow citizens by the memory of this great man, never to lose sight of the public welfare.

welfare. It is in this manner that those illustrious islanders so gloriously imitate the ancient Romans, and prove by their actions how advantageous patriotism is to a nation, notwithstanding it may sometimes be carried to a blameable excess.

CHAPTER V.

The State of Religion in England—Toleration—The Catholics—The Clergy—The Puritans—The Methodists—Whitfield—Sunday—Anniversary of the Martyrdom of Charles I.—Quakers—Anabaptists—Deism—The Reverend Mr. Williams—Suicide—Hon. Mr. Damer—Lord Clive—The Jews—Doctor Falcon—The Philosopher's Stone—Linguet.

VOLTAIRE observes that, if there was only one religion in England, despotism would infallibly ensue:—if there were but two, adds he, they would cut one another's throats; but as such a number of sects are there tolerated, who worship the Supreme Being in so many different manners, a *holy enthusiasm* never troubles their minds, and they live in quiet and tranquillity. This remark is undoubtedly just; and the tumult in 1780, in which the name of the protestant religion was made use of as a pretence, proves nothing to the contrary.

The legislative power has reduced the principles of toleration to a system which seems to have attained the highest degree of perfection; and it ought to be remarked to the honour of the English parliament, that at the moment when they were surrounded by a furious multitude, and the life of every member was in danger, no one proposed the repeal of the

bill in favour of the Roman Catholics, which had occasioned the tumult.

If the tenets of the established faith were alone permitted, the people would soon groan under the pressure of slavery; for the king is head of the church, and in that capacity his power is unlimited.

Persecution, a practice which the christians have borrowed from the Jews, and which they have made use of against them, will never, in all probability, take root in England: The prodigious number of dissenters; the liberty with which mankind are there allowed to think and to act as they please; their intercourse with foreign nations, which is the source of their riches; and a thousand other considerations, all tend to establish that toleration to which the kingdom owes its grandeur, its opulence, and its prosperity.

It may not be improper to quote here a celebrated saying of Lord Chesterfield's to a monk at Rome. The holy zealot having assured him that he was about to make a voyage to England, with the sole view of converting the inhabitants to the catholic faith, and *that he was ready to suffer every thing for the sake of religion*: "You will be too late," my good father," replies the earl: "it is in vain that you are solicitous to obtain the crown of martyrdom; alas! my ungrateful countrymen bestow it now no more."

To obtain any employment under the government, it is necessary to take the oaths of supremacy and allegiance; but as the catholics either cannot or will not take them, they are deprived of a great many advantages, and excluded from a number of offices, to which their birth and merits fully entitle them.

The first and most ancient family in England is in this predicament; it is that of Howard, of which the duke of Norfolk is the head; to this title the office

office of hereditary marshal of England is attached; his religion, however, not only precludes him from executing the duties of this high employment in person, but also from taking his seat in the House of Peers.*

The catholics in England have their bishops as well as the protestant: these commonly reside in London, and live on eleemosynary contributions. Among these *titular* prelates there is an archbishop of Canterbury, who is their head. In the year 1778 there were forty thousand members of the church of Rome in the capital; I doubt whether there are at present so many in all the other parts of the kingdom; as the chapels of the foreign ministers attract prodigious numbers to the metropolis. There are a great many, however, in Lancashire, Staffordshire, and Sussex.

Notwithstanding the clergy of the church of England have large incomes, and its dignitaries live in great magnificence, they are but very little respected by the people. The reason is evident.—The various sects that prevail in that island, weaken the interests of religion in general, and inspire but little esteem for these ecclesiastics; who live, for the most part, according to their own caprice. The excesses also, and the depredations they commit, lessen the respect that their sacred function ought to inspire. Soon after the execution of Dr. Dodd for forgery, another priest was punished for debauching young girls from ten to twelve years of age, whom he had been employed to instruct in the principles of morality and religion.

It is common to see clergymen fight duels;—I shall say nothing of their drunkenness, and a thousand other scandalous vices which they practise with-

F 4

out

* Since our author wrote, lord Surry, now a member of the church of England, has succeeded to the dukedom of Norfolk.

out shame. They are often imprisoned for debt; and it is only twenty years since, that they used to administer one of the most awful ceremonies of religion, for a mere trifle.

They do not now celebrate clandestine marriages: formerly it was not necessary to run to Scotland to marry against the will of parents and guardians; a number of wretches were ready at all times of the day to bestow the nuptial benediction for the sum of two shillings. When one of them had pawned his gown—a circumstance not at all uncommon—he used to officiate in a brown or grey coat, and tie the *happy pair* as firmly together as a prelate clothed in his pontifical vestments, and administering the ceremony at the altar of his cathedral.

The church of England is governed by two archbishops and twenty-four bishops. The archbishop of Canterbury, who is the chief, is at the same time primate of England, and ranks next to the princes of the blood. He has twenty-one bishops under him; the remaining three are suffragans of the archbishop of York. All these prelates sit in the House of Peers, and are commonly devoted to the interests of the court. It is very uncommon to see them take part in the political debates, even if they are eloquent, for fear of exposing their dignity, which the peers in opposition would not, perhaps, have the modesty to respect.

As the clergy in all ages, and among all people, could never brook contradiction; and as this prerogative, which they arrogate to themselves, is not allowed in England, they have very wisely resolved to remain silent, and be altogether passive in parliament.

In the ages of barbarity and ignorance a law was enacted in favour of the church, equally singular and ridiculous; and as it formed one of the privi-

leges

leges of a numerous and powerful body it would be very difficult, even now, to repeal it. At the time when the civil and ecclesiastical states formed two separate and distinct bodies, and when none but the priesthood had any knowledge of learning, if a culprit was able to decypher a few of the Gothic characters in which the Bible was then written, he was allowed to escape from punishment.

As every one is able to read at this enlightened period, the penal statutes have now always a clause, excluding the benefit of clergy.

The principles of toleration adopted by the English, account for the little zeal displayed by them in making proselytes to their religion.

Scarce a single missionary is to be met with in all their immense territories in Asia. There are only a few methodists, and some anabaptists, led thither by enthusiasm.

The laws oblige every ship navigated by a hundred men to carry a clergyman with them; this is strictly observed in all the kings ships; the East India company, however, regarding the church as a very unprofitable part of a cargo, take only ninety-nine men on board, and thus evade the statute. That opulent body never trouble themselves about religion; for throughout all Bengal there is neither church nor chapel.

The Puritans are properly nothing else but Calvinists: for all their ceremonies and principles are founded on the doctrines of that reformer. The French protestants, however do not join in their communion, but as in Germany, follow their own liturgy, and perform divine service to this day in the French language. Their countrymen are ready to conclude from thence, that to restore so many thousands to their native soil, the free exercise of their religion is only wanting. I doubt, however, whether such a toleration would make any im-

pression on the *refugees* in England or Holland, and far less on those who reside in Germany.

The methodists form a very numerous body : Whitfield was their founder. He was a man of profound knowledge and inflexible virtue, and has only died a few years since. It was customary with him to preach in the most frequented streets and squares in London. His intention was to reform and purify the morals of his fellow citizens. The novelty of his sermons, and the place where he delivered them, always procured him a numerous auditory. The clergy were alarmed, and all the pulpits resounded with imprecations against this man, who was described as at once a fool and a fanatic. From that moment the people began to persecute this zealous reformer, wherever he had the courage to appear. To outrage he opposed sweetness of temper and invincible patience ; and, by means of this sage conduct, multiplied the number of his adherents. People of distinction, who visited him from curiosity, often became his disciples.

His sobriety and discretion were very remarkable : his honesty also was unimpeachable ; for he distributed, with a scrupulous exactness, the *alms* that were confided to his care. At length, being incapable of administering the duties of his mission to such immense crowds as attended him daily, he called in the assistance of some of his friends, and particularly of the celebrated Mr. Wesley. Soon after he built a church in the neighbourhood of Moorfields, called the Tabernacle, which is still held in high estimation by its followers ; many of whom have erected houses in the neighbourhood.

Whitfield went four times to America to preach this doctrine, and was amply rewarded for his zeal. If ever the chief of a sect merited the esteem of a philosopher, it is without contradiction this singular man. Without being impelled by ambition, or
avarice,

avarice, to carry on his projected reformation, he remained till his last moment faithful to his *aim*; which was, to make mankind better, by means of a purer system of morals.

It is easy to perceive from the *phlegm* with which the English perform the duties of their religion, that they are very little impressed by a sense of its awfulness. Even in a collegiate church, when they are *chanting* in full choir, the cold, inanimate, and sometimes irreverent manner in which they acquit themselves, shocks the feelings of a stranger.

The clergy and the laity who wish to pass for good christians, seem to think that abstaining from all works and worldly affairs on a Sunday, entitles them to such denomination; This Judaical and popular custom is supported by a statute, which was enacted when puritanism was in full vigour, and which has not a little contributed to that gloomy taciturnity which forms such a conspicuous feature in an Englishman's character.

The above law prohibits the amusements of music and dancing on the only day when the tradesman or mechanic has time to divert himself.

We cannot but deplore the weakness of human nature on beholding great and enlightened men becoming the zealous partizans of ridiculous and even pernicious customs. The learned Dr. Johnson was so attached to this in particular, that, on his death-bed, he conjured Sir Joshua Reynolds to grant him one request:—The English Apelles promised his assent—and found it to be—"That he would not paint on a Sunday."

The pulpit is often made use of, in the capital, to insinuate and propagate political principles. The court party generally make use of this method, which is notwithstanding, always hurtful to their interests. The clergy on such occasions are invariably led by the hope of preferment: no one, however,

ever, is *duped* by their conduct. When they confine themselves to subjects in which politics are not concerned, they are for the most part heard with attention.

Soon after the earthquake at Lisbon, they declaimed against masquerades, and occasioned the abolition of that species of amusement for many years.

By proving that *inoculation* was an useful and a necessary operation, they brought it into fashion: they even went so far as to interest the conscience of parents, and make it appear a duty.

All *fasts* are appointed by the king, as head of the church. Those days are not so solemn as Sundays; they are, however, literally *penitentiary* to the poor, who by means of them are prevented from procuring food for their wives and children.

The anniversary of the unfortunate Charles I. which is celebrated on the 30th of January, has now degenerated into a *mere farce*. Wilkes once asserted in the House of Commons, that this day was the most glorious in the annals of his country!

I beg leave to observe here, that the opinions concerning any monarch of modern times have never been so contradictory, as in respect to that sovereign. Among many, he passes as a state criminal who merited his fate: the greater number, however, revere him as a saint who was the innocent victim of a party composed of fanatical and ambitious men.

The famous Hume has not a little contributed, in his History of England, to propagate this latter opinion. The end he proposed was undoubtedly to sacrifice the public confidence, of which every historian ought to be ambitious, on the altar of riches and preferment. At the reign of Elizabeth he leaves the right road, and ceases to follow the track

of truth. Those who wish to investigate the history of that country under the government of the house of Stuart, can follow no better guide than Rapin de Thoyras; an impartial writer, who has proved all his assertions by authentic documents, and by that means acquired and maintained an extraordinary degree of reputation in England.

But if we will suppose for a moment, that the innocence of Charles is only imaginary, it must be allowed that a free people, who have established certain principles of their own, concerning the laws and the rights of human nature, are alone capable of judging whether, in such a case, a head encircled by a royal diadem merits the hatchet of an executioner. The philosopher of another country can only think in his closet on this tragical and memorable event.

I now return to my subject. The Quakers in England, twenty years ago, amounted to sixty thousand: they are not so numerous at present. The young men, in whom religious fervour is not so ardent as formerly, abjure a faith which excludes them from all employments and dignities. The young women, too, are by it limited in their ambition, with regard to marriage; and their vanity is not a little mortified, with respect to dress, which is so natural to their age and sex. As they cannot use fancy colours, nor wear powder, feathers, ribbands, nor jewels, they usually wear the dearest stuffs: this does not however, compensate for what they lose in regard to other parts of their apparel.

The coats of the men are generally without buttons and without plaits; the hats are also large and round: many, however, neglect all this, and appear like other people. The most zealous of the sect are those only who still preserve an outward distinction: their aversion to oaths and criminal professions is a characteristic common to all.

The

The legislative power has been exceedingly indulgent towards them. Their solemn affirmation is admitted in every case where the life and liberty of the subject is not interested. One never sees a quaker the prosecutor in a criminal action. Their aversion to war is so great, that, during the invasion of the savages of Pennsylvania in 1775, they allowed their country to be ravaged, and their fellow-citizens to be massacred, without choosing to revenge them. They remained deaf to all their calamities and misfortunes; and it was not till despair had taken possession of their souls, and the dead bodies of their slaughtered brethren had been exposed before the state-house at Philadelphia, that the quakers had consented to take up arms.

The anabaptists decrease in numbers, and for the very same reason as the quakers. They do not affect to distinguish themselves from the rest of mankind by the originality of their dress, manners, or language.

It is at Chelsea, a village beautifully situated on the banks of the Thames, where their principal place of worship is, they have also several others in London.

Notwithstanding the prodigious number of different persuasions in England, *deism* makes a rapid progress. The reverend Mr. Williams, in the year 1776, formed the resolution of establishing a new sect. In consequence of this he hired a chapel in the metropolis, and procured a great number of subscribers. This hardy attempt made much noise. Two letters, one from the late king of Prussia, and the other written by Voltaire to this clergyman, in which these two great men bestowed many praises on his undertaking, helped to make the attempt still more remarkable. As this projector joined some talents to a great knowledge of the world, he put in practice every scheme to establish his enterprise.

One might then see a circumstance before unexampled in the annals of mankind : a numerous assembly composed of people of all religions united under one head, laying aside all manner of mysteries and ceremonies, and adoring the God of the universe in concert. The service had something in it very engaging on account of its simplicity ; but its sameness was not sufficiently fascinating to mankind in general. To the *deist* it was however, too ceremonious ; because it is very difficult to persuade him of the utility of any form of worship whatever.

In fine, the scheme failed. These meetings have not been held these some years past ; and the chapel is now become a conventicle for methodists. Williams has published his liturgy. It is an excellent work ; has had much success, and is still read with pleasure.

Deism is in a great degree the cause of suicide—a crime at present so common in England. The English have actually a form of prayer, in which they beseech God to banish from the hearts of his servants such a frightful temptation !

The crime, however, is as frequently committed at Paris as in London ; a circumstance which proves very forcibly to me, that this epidemical disorder proceeds less from the climate and the use of sea-coal fires, than we imagine on the continent. The English view it as a disease of the soul, which, far from deserving reproach, ought rather to excite compassion. The punishment, which, to the disgrace of reason, is still in many countries attached to self-murder, never restrains despair, which mocks it, but falls wholly on innocent and afflicted families.

This malady (for I can call it no other) often gives occasion to the most singular scenes. I one day beheld an ill-dressed man, with a countenance disordered by a thousand passions, who walked backwards and

and forwards on the balustrade of Blackfriars-bridge, and seemed to be in the profoundest reverie. The danger that he was exposed to, soon made him remarked, and occasioned great inquietude to the passers. One person having urged him to descend, he made no answer; at length some of the spectators becoming more pressing in their entreaties, he asked one of them if he would do him a favour. On being answered in the affirmative, he besought him to find out a certain person, whose dwelling he described with the utmost exactness, and recount to him what he had seen.—With these words he leapt into the Thames.

The conduct of the honourable Mr. Damer, only son to lord Milton, was still more extraordinary and gave rise to a thousand melancholy reflections. Young, handsome, tenderly beloved by his father, nearly adored by the ladies, and with all the honours and dignities of the state within his reach, he conceived a sudden disgust to life.

Having repaired to a bagnio, he commanded twelve of the most handsome women of the town to be brought to him, and gave orders that they should be supplied with all manner of delicacies. Having afterwards bolted the door, he made them undress one another, and, when naked, requested them to amuse him with the most voluptuous attitudes. About an hour afterwards he dismissed them loaded with presents, and then, drawing a pistol from his pocket, immediately put an end to his existence. This happened in the year 1776.

It is mortifying to reflect that this hatred to existence should have taken possession of the mind of so great a man as lord Clive, who also terminated his glorious career with his own hand. It is neither his rank nor his immense riches, but his great abilities and his extraordinary exploits in Asia which make him appear great in my eyes. I am convinced that

this nobleman, as a general and statesman, would have been equally eminent in Europe as in Asia. Let it be remembered, however, that I speak of nothing but his talents, as I am very careful of saying much about his private character. If the clamours of plundered and oppressed Indians and Europeans had never reached from the borders of the Ganges to the banks of the Thames, his immense riches alone would have attested his insatiable avarice. All his treasures, however, could not prevent a prosecution against him, which exposed his character to obloquy, and his conduct to observation; and which, by insensibly augmenting the melancholy that had long preyed upon his mind, precipitated that fatal resolution which delivered mankind from the scourge of Asia.

The Jews are allowed in England, as well as in Holland, the free exercise of their religion; their numbers and their riches are therefore continually augmented. One is astonished at the prodigious difference between the Portuguese and German Jews established in that island. Dress, language, manners, cleanliness, are all in favour of the former, who indeed can scarce be distinguished from Christians. This extends even to their prejudices and their public worship: the features peculiar to the whole race are the only peculiarity that they have common.

The famous Toland, in the year 1715, recommended the naturalization of this people; a circumstance that actually took place in 1752, by means of an act of parliament. However, the general discontent of the nation, occasioned by the German Jews (a class of men who may be looked upon as the very refuse of human nature) obliged the legislature

legislature to repeal it in the course of the following year.

All the children of Israel, who are obliged to quit Holland and Germany, take refuge in England, where they live by roguery; if they themselves do not steal, they at least help to conceal and to dispose of the plunder. They are therefore so much hated in England, that the honesty of their Portuguese brethren cannot weaken the unfavorable impression which such a band of robbers has occasioned.

There is a person of this nation called Cain Chenul Falk, but better known by the name of Doctor Falcon, who for thirty years has been famous for his cabalistical discoveries. He lives in a large house; is attended by a small number of domesticks: is engaged in no manner of business: and gives away a great deal of money to the poor. When he goes out, which indeed is but seldom, he is always clothed in a long robe, which agrees very well with his flowing beard, and noble figure. He is in the 70th year of his age. I shall not here recount the wonderful and incredible stories told of this old man. It is most probable that he is a very great chymist; and that he has, in that occult science made some extraordinary discoveries, which he does not choose to communicate. A certain prince, who was very zealous in his search after the philosopher's stone, some years ago wished to pay him a visit, Falcon, however, could not be prevailed upon to grant him an interview.

It may be easily imagined that, in a city like London, there are a great number of weak people who may be easily imposed upon. As the English have a high opinion of the German alchymists, the projectors of that country often pretend to have found out the art of making gold, and dupe them of their guineas by means of this stale trick.

Magic

Magic, contented with exercising its despotism within the ten circles of High Germany, has not as yet, by a bold flight, attempted to cross the ocean. If this silly and ridiculous passion were ever to take root in England, its effects would be very uncommon in that country, where every thing is in extremes.

In the year 1777, Linguet went to London with the professed intention of reforming the national character: he had, however, unfortunately neglected to learn the language.

This Frenchman was always fond of paradoxes.

His pride was flattered to see certain objects in a different light from the rest of mankind; he had, in his own country, written a panegyric on the virtues of a Tiberius and a Nero—two monsters who were a disgrace to human nature. He affirms, "That England never produced any one great man; that its boasted constitution does not preserve liberty to the subject; that the inhabitants are not industrious; that their navy is contemptible; that their sailors are both ignorant and cowardly; and, lastly, that Garrick was a bad actor."

Under pretence that he was assailed of being persecuted by the English government, this singular man suddenly disappeared, and returned to his ungrateful countrymen, who recompensed his patriotism with a lodging in the Bastile.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER VI.

Public Spirit—National Characteristics—Hospitals—General Wolfe—The Duke de Nivernois—Generosity of the English Ladies—Maria Theresa—Lord Tyrconnel—Lord Chatham.

ONE of the most distinguished characteristics of the English is their *public spirit*; a virtue unknown in any other country, and which no other language than theirs is able to express. This passion consists in the active zeal of every individual, to co-operate towards the general good: the very lowest of the people possess it in a very extraordinary degree.

During the American war, many common sailors refused the bounty that was offered by parliament, and entered into the navy from mere attachment to their country. I have known several poor people, who, at a general election, have remained deaf to the most lucrative offers, and reserved their voices for those who, by their patriotism and their talents, were most capable of serving the state.

The great number of public foundations every where to be met with, prove in an eminent degree the warmth of this national virtue. Without mentioning either the naval hospital of Greenwich, or the military establishment at Chelsea, which rival royal palaces in magnificence, London contains a prodigious number of public edifices which are regulated with astonishing order. St. Bartholomew's hospital alone can admit 5000 patients at one time. Bedlam, which is appropriated to the cure of madness, is celebrated for its conveniencies, and the attention which is paid to the unfortunate wretches

who happen to be afflicted with that terrible malady. At the gate are two statues, executed by an English artist, of the name of * Cibber, which may be reckoned among the few excellent specimens of sculpture which England has produced. One of these represents a wretch absorbed in the most profound melancholy; the other a desperate maniac loaded with chains. These two figures are executed with so much expression, that they may dispute the palm with the first performances in Westminster-abbey.

In regard to work of national munificence, and public utility, the court party and the opposition constantly unite. Even in places of diversion, the English endeavour to excite patriotism. The most brilliant actions of some of the most famous of their generals are represented in the saloon at Vauxhall. It is thus that the memory of a Clive, a Boscawen, and an Amherst are immortalized; and that their fellow-citizens are inflamed, even in the very lap of pleasure, with the noble emulation of rivaling their virtues.

The source of this lively interest, which every Englishman evinces in the affairs of his country, proceeds from the idea that the very meanest subject is benefited by the prosperity of the commonwealth. This gives rise to the most singular customs. After a victory, they compliment each other. The glory of a state, of which every individual is a member, sometimes affects them in such a manner, that I have seen persons remarkable for their phlegm, congratulate one another with the utmost transports of joy.

It is not till become venerable by age, that the human eye, which observes every thing too near it in a bad light, is at length accustomed to see things in their true point of view. We regard with an attachment

* Father to Colley Cibber.

attachment bordering on enthusiasm, the actions of the great men of antiquity, and pay but a cold admiration to the same actions, when performed by our contemporaries. Of this the name of general Wolfe is a striking example.

Those who are acquainted with the events of the war before the last, must recollect that this great man perished before Quebec, in the arms of victory; but few, perhaps, know that to him alone the glory of conquering Canada belongs.

Both the navy and army were agreed on the propriety of raising the siege of Quebec, which was deemed impregnable. Wolfe alone thought otherwise, and he was triumphant. In the midst of the action, having received a mortal wound, he immediately fainted, and was carried out of the field of battle. In the mean time the enemy's line being broken some of the soldiers employed in attending him called out, "They fly." These words, as it were penetrating to his very soul, recall him to life; he opens his eyes, and asks with great eagerness, "Who fly?"—"The French." "Then "God be praised!" he replied,—and immediately expired.

Epaminandos in the same manner died invoking the gods for victory with his last breath.

The duke of Nivernois, who went into England in the year 1762, in quality of ambassador extraordinary from the court of Versailles, to sign the peace betwixt England and France, experienced the effects of the national spirit in a very uncommon manner. The first night after his arrival, having slept at Canterbury, the master of the Inn thought that he ought not to let slip such a good occasion of making a long bill. "A nobleman," says he, "of so elevated a rank, charged with the reconciliation of two great nations after a bloody war, will not signalize his entry into the kingdom by a

"dispute

disp
He ac
ing fo
charge
without
forgot
in rap
secre
The
ing to
natura
signat
concer
his, th
and be
justice
intenti
These
themse
largest
resort t
men h
On be
with o
any m
tice to
deaf to
he wa
month
died so
had re
Such
comme
us in C
instead
only o
The
1742,

dispute with a tavern-keeper about a reckoning." He accordingly demanded fifty guineas next morning for a night's lodging. The impudence of the charge astonished his grace; who paid it, however, without hesitation, continued his journey, and soon forgot the petty imposition, leaving the inn-keeper in raptures; who, thinking that the whole affair was a secret, plumed himself upon his management.

The inhabitants of Canterbury, however, happening to hear of the circumstance, notwithstanding their natural antipathy to the French, were seized with indignation, and thought that the national honour was concerned in the punishment of it. In consequence of this, the first people in that city assembled together, and besought the duke to bring the delinquent to justice. The ambassador thanked them for their intentions, but would not hear of a prosecution. These gentlemen, therefore, resolved to punish him themselves. The inn, kept by this fellow, was the largest and best frequented in the whole town; the resort to it was prodigious; the neighbouring gentlemen held their clubs and assemblies in that place. On being informed of this circumstance, they all, with one accord, determined never to enter the house any more. The landlord put every scheme in practice to bring back his customers; but they were deaf to his prayers and entreaties. In this situation he was assailed by his creditors, and in a few months experienced all the horrors of poverty. He died some years afterwards in London, where he had resided in the situation of a waiter.

Such circumstances of national spirit are not uncommon in England: they are however, related to us in Germany in such a fantastical manner, that, instead of exciting sentiments of admiration, they only occasion us to smile.

The generous resolution of the English ladies in 1742, is an anecdote extremely well known. The misfortunes

misfortunes of Maria Theresa affected them so deeply, that they unanimously resolved to dispose of their jewels, and send her Imperial Majesty the produce of them, to help her to carry on the war against her enemies. They accordingly opened a subscription. The old duchess of Marlborough gave 20,000*l.* and the sum total amounted in a few days to 100,000*l.* sterling. The empress, however, refused the offer, and in a most affecting letter, after returning her thanks for their generous intentions, observed, that it was the assistance of the whole nation, and not that of individuals, that her majesty could accept of.

If this magnanimous conduct of a few women who knew nothing of Maria Theresa, but her misfortunes, had happened some centuries ago, it would at this day be the object of our admiration and astonishment: it made the most lively impression on the mind of the empress queen.

Strangers, and more particularly the French, are pleased to ridicule the interest which the English take in regard to political transactions; this *taste* appears to them extremely foolish.

Lord Tyrconnel, a nobleman of Irish extraction, but who, being born and educated in France, had of course adopted their manners, their fashions, and their maxims, when he was thirty years of age visited England for the first time. As he understood the language extremely well, he was obliged to hear political discussions wherever he went; so that his aversion to this subject soon amounted to an insurmountable disgust. At last resolved to divert himself without being eternally plagued about state affairs, he repairs to a bagnio, and invites some females to sup with him: he had, however, scarcely taken his place at table when these female politicians began also to discuss parliamentary questions. His lordship in vain attempted to give another turn

to the conversation;—it had too many charms for these nymphs to be dropped so easily; they always returned to the subject, till at last this Frenchified Irishman, losing all patience, left them in a passion, and next day returned to France.

It is seldom or never that an Englishman unites the character of a minister with that of a patriot. The prodigious power, and the facility with which they are enabled to amass astonishing riches generally make the ministers forget those principles, which by giving them popularity, raised them to eminence.

Would it be imagined that in a kingdom where the power of the sovereign is restrained, that of his ministers should be more extensive than in most despotic governments? This is however, the case in England, where the king, according to the principles of the constitution, can do no *wrong*, and where those whom he employs are obliged to be answerable for every thing. They not only influence parliament; the honours, the dignities the very treasure of the nation are confided to their care;—in fine they dispose of every thing. It is singular enough to see a simple esquire making dukes and earls at his pleasure, bestowing ribbands which he himself does not possess, and giving away employments which are at once lucrative and certain, while the duration of his own power depends entirely on the king's pleasure.

Of all the statesmen whom England has produced, no one was ever so zealous a patriot as the immortal Chatham, who joined to extraordinary talents the purest attachment to his country. Never was any English minister so much honoured with the public confidence, and never was there such a happy concord between the king, the parliament, and the people, as under his administration. Alas, it was too short for the welfare of England!

It is thought that, if he had remained two years longer in office, the American war would never have happened, and the flourishing situation in which his country found herself in the year 1762, would have been nothing more than a preface of that glory to which she would have afterwards arrived.

During his administration, all the power of the state appeared to be wholly centered in him, for his associates in the government seemed only so many subalterns acting under his directions. By his means Great Britain, with a degree of felicity unexampled before among any of the European nations, was triumphant in the course of one* year, in the four quarters of the globe.

France never had so dangerous an enemy;—it was a principle with him to humble that formidable power.

He was not fond of a court;—during the time of peace, he could scarce hide his aversion to it, as he was persuaded that it was impossible to be at the same time the favourite of the sovereign and the friend of the people.

Notwithstanding his infirmities, he *never failed*, even towards the latter end of his life, to pay the most exact attention to his parliamentary duties: wrapped up in flannels, and supported by crutches, his voice was a terror to the ministry. He may be truly said to have died in the service of his country; having been seized with a mortal distemper in the midst of a speech in the House of Peers, in which he asserted its dearest interests.

At the very last moment of his life, his mind was occupied by the cares of patriotism. Lord Camden was present at his dissolution. This nobleman was the intimate friend of the hero; his integrity, his abilities and an uniformity in principles had con-

iliated

reconciled his esteem and rendered him worthy of it. Socrates at his last hour philosophised with his friends; and these two great men conversed about state affairs at the very brink of eternity. At length perceiving his death to approach, the noble patriot, after locking his friend's hands in his own, exclaimed "My dear Camden, save my country!"

The best proof that can be given of the virtue of this great man, is the consideration, that he was for many years prime minister of Great Britain without either becoming more rich, or more haughty, than while a private gentleman.

After his decease, the greatest honours were paid to his memory, the expences of his funeral discharged by the public, and a large pension assigned to his family. His body was accompanied to the grave by most of those who, on account of their birth, their rank, and above all their talents, might be reckoned the greatest men in the state. It was not a slight loss that they deplored—every one was deeply afflicted; even the spectators were in tears. Colonel Barre, a celebrated orator, and who in Lord Chatham's life-time had often opposed his measures, amidst the emotions of his grief, snatching the banner of the deceased earl from one of his domestics, carried it with his own hand into the church. When the corpse was laid in the grave, the marquis of Lansdowne exclaimed, "The sun of England is now set for ever!"

CHAPTER VII.

Commerce of the English—The Peace of 1762—The Duke of Bedford—Duc de Choiseul—The Merchants—Sir George Colbrooke—Bank of England.

ALTHOUGH the principal natural productions exported from England are only tin and coal, yet the inhabitants are the first commercial nation in the world. It is to an excellent constitution, wise laws, and an active and indefatigable genius, that this eminent advantage is to be attributed.

It is natural that the last of these qualities, joined to enterprise and prudence, should extend in trade, and add daily to its riches. From this also proceeds that spirit of conquest which the English of the present age, and the Carthaginians of old, have interwoven in their commercial system. This has never been the case with the Dutch; their acquisitions were entirely the effect of a happy conjuncture of circumstances, at a period when, with arms in their hands, they were obliged to defend their liberties—nay, I may add their lives.

Since the time of Cromwell, the real or pretended reason for all their wars was commerce alone. They never had acceded to any treaty of peace since the protectorate of that great man, (except the unfortunate one of 1783), which did not procure them some incontestible advantages in favour of their trade. All their statesmen, however differently they may have thought in respect to other

maxims

matters, have agreed unanimously in this great national principle; even in the most critical situations this was never forgotten: the reason is indeed apparent; it alone could make their administration popular, cover their plunders, and acquire them reputation.

If we are to believe the chevalier d'Eon, the late duke of Bedford was one of those infamous ministers, who from venal motives betrayed their country to France, by the peace of 1762. There can be but little doubt concerning the justice of this accusation, as it came from a person who was at that very time *charge de'affairs*, and minister plenipotentiary from the court of Versailles; and who consequently had good opportunities of knowing the fact, and indeed offered to give the most convincing proofs of it.

This nobleman, although he made no difficulty in selling his country for gold, was nevertheless capable of an action seemingly very great, but which had its source in fear: for although an English minister should despise both the king and the parliament, he dare not brave the fury of the people. This dread of the people is a new proof of the excellence of their constitution. A courtier may be surrounded with honours, and invested with dignities; but an open and upright conduct alone can give him reputation and conciliate the favour of his fellow citizens.

The duke of Bedford, the richest subject in England, was sent in the year 1762 to Paris, in quality of Ambassador, to sign the peace. He was opposed to the duke de Choiseul, and this universal genius was evidently superior to him in regard to talents. The preliminary articles having been signed were soon known in Paris, and the next morning an English Jew requested an audience of the duke of Bedford. This man, who had been

for many years in Asia, made his grace sensible, that, from an ignorance of the trade and even the geography of that country, he had committed such gross faults that the East India company would lose several thousand pounds sterling yearly by his means, and that the treaty itself would be the occasion of new quarrels between the two nations.

The ambassador saw that the Jew was in the right, and resolved instantly to repair his fault. Having procured the new articles in writing, he immediately departed for Versailles, and besought the duke to have them acceded to. "I did not think," observed Choiseul, "that I had been negotiating with a novice in politics, but with the minister of a powerful nation, who knew the validity of a treaty signed with his own hand." The duke of Bedford replied to this with all the boldness and noble frankness of a true Englishman. "You are in the right—I am but a novice, and not an experienced minister. I have erred through ignorance; but I shall not by a base treason aggravate the fault which I have committed, for to be silent in a case of this importance would be actually to merit the name of a traitor. Choose therefore for yourself—either consent to make the proposed alteration which I have mentioned to you, or I shall instantly depart and lay my head at the mercy of the English parliament."

A peace was then absolutely necessary for France: the duke de Choiseul agreed to some of the propositions; and, if we may believe report, the negotiation was hastened by a present.

The profession of commerce is highly esteemed in England, and is honoured and considered as the source of all the wealth of the state. A merchant may become a justice of the peace, or a member of parliament; in fine, he may aspire to the first dig-

nities

ities, provided his talents correspond with his ambition.

Even tradesmen are held in some degree of respect, and indeed seem entitled to it both by their behaviour and their riches. Some of them are exceedingly affluent. I myself know that the late duke of Newcastle owed his butcher no less than 11,000*l.* at one time.

The love of convenience, to which the English are so much attached, makes them confide their cash to the care of a banker. Not only merchants, but also wealthy people in private life, and sometimes even the public offices, deposit their money in this manner. There were forty eight banking houses in the metropolis in the year 1784.

The eminent merchants also open accounts with the bank of England, which receives more than half the ready money in the kingdom, and in return circulates its own paper.

None but very rich people ever become bankers; of these two, three or four, generally associate together, and deposit a large sum of money to answer the necessary demands. The duke of Marlborough generally keeps 15, or 20,000*l.* in the hands of Child; Drummond often has 100,000*l.* sterling, belonging to the Admiralty and War office.

About twelve years since Sir George Colbrooke exhibited a wonderful example of that thirst after wealth, with which some men are so unfortunately cursed. This gentleman was a member of parliament, the first banker in London, and for many years chairman of the East India Company. He gave great entertainments kept a numerous retinue of servants, and could command any sum of money. Would it be imagined that such a man could ever be ruined by a speculation upon alum? It is actually a fact, that having attempted to monopolise this article, and by that means acquire a new accession to his

his immense fortune, he failed in his project, and became bankrupt. His poverty was at length so great that he was obliged to solicit support from that very company whose affairs he had formerly directed with unbounded sway.

Having obtained with some difficulty an annuity of two hundred per annum, he went to France, and lived for many years at Boulogne.

On the commencement of the war, in the year 1778, the court of France, who had given orders for the departure of all the English from that kingdom, were so affected with his catastrophe, that an exception was made in favour of him and his family.

The order and regularity which prevail in the bank of England are truly admirable. It is reckoned that the notes lost annually by shipwreck, fire and other accidents, pay all the expences of this great establishment. The duke de Choiseul once attempted to ruin its credit; for some days there was a continual demand upon it, and the directors taking fright, began to pay in silver, which was counted out very slowly by the clerks. The emissaries of France every where prognosticated its downfall; all England was alarmed: it was saved, however, by the public spirit of the merchants, the principal of whom associated together, and agreed to take its notes in payments.

The East India company keep their money in the bank of England, and have been known on the arrival of a fleet, to give a draft of 160,000l. sterling for the duties, on a small slip of paper.

Some years since a Hertfordshire farmer applied to one of the clerks of the bank for the loan of 800l. for a few days, on a note of 10,000l. which he held in his hand, and offered to deposit with him. The clerk refused him, observed that such a thing was unusual, at the same time offered either to pay him

him the whole amount in cash, or exchange it for lesser notes. This, however, would not satisfy the farmer who still persevered.—What would have been done to a peasant in such a case, either in France, or Germany! He would have been beat by the domestics, and then pushed into the street.

He may thank his stars for having been born in England. Instead of such treatment, at his own request he was waited upon by Mr. Payne, one of the directors, who instantly lent him the money required.

Having returned, according to his promise, at the end of eight days, and punctually repaid the sum which he had borrowed, on being asked, why he had such an attachment to that particular note, he frankly replied, "Because I have the fellow of " it at home."

Notwithstanding it is extremely difficult to counterfeit a bank-note more especially on account of the water-mark, which is imprinted on the paper while making, yet the allurements arising from success have induced many to make the attempt. In the year 1776, a great number were issued, in which the original was imitated with wonderful art. The fraud was not discovered until notes to the amount of thirty-six thousand pounds sterling had been circulated among the public.

After prodigious trouble and expence, the bank at last discovered, seized, and imprisoned the ingenious culprit.

This circumstance gave occasion to an event, which puts human nature to the blush; it is, indeed, so diabolically atrocious, that one would readily believe it to be an anecdote borrowed from the annals of the infernal regions.

The person who committed the forgery was of the name of Morton; he was a young man of a reputable family, and as soon as apprehended was

to gaol, and being put in irons, languished amidst all the horrors naturally inspired by a criminal prosecution.

The governors of the bank were exceedingly rejoiced, as they hoped, in the course of the trial, to discover the whole of this mysterious affair, which levelled at the very source of their credit.

It was on this idea that a pretended friend of Morton's founded his infernal project. This person whose name was D—, repairs to the prison, informs the young man how much he was affected with his unhappy destiny, and assures him that he is disposed to attempt every stratagem to snatch him from inevitable destruction.

A friend in such a situation is always welcome. The prisoner, who expected nothing else than an infamous and speedy death, thinks that he sees his guardian angel before him, and puts his destiny entirely in the power of the traitor, who in a short time, by means of money and ingenuity, accomplishes his escape from the dungeon where he was confined.

Every thing being prepared for flight, Morton next morning has the inexpressible satisfaction of seeing himself at liberty, and in the dominions of France. He changes his name, takes the road to Flanders, and arriving at Bruges, resolves to reside there.

D—, in the mean time had not lost sight of his plan. He proposes to the bank, who were greatly embarrassed at the escape of Morton, to deliver him into their hands on condition of receiving the sum of 5000*l.* as a reward.

The governors thought that this was too high a premium, and perhaps imagined, with great justice, that a man who offered to betray his friend for five thousand pounds, would find no great reluctance in committing the same villainy for one thousand; and he,

he, seeing that he could obtain no more, at length gave his consent.

In the mean time that passion which the English entertain for their native country preyed so violently on the mind of Morton, that all his wishes pointed solely towards England.

Four months were already elapsed, and he was still at Bruges; from hence he had kept up a constant correspondence with D—, who from time to time had sent him some trifling supplies of money, when he received the joyous news that he might now go back to England in safety; as his family had succeeded in the negotiation with the bank, for that purpose. Thus what neither the signature of all the governors, nor the very word of the sovereign himself could have accomplished, was instantly effected by a simple letter from his perfidious correspondent.

Full of a blind confidence in his deliverer and benefactor, who had desired him to return immediately, he arrives in London, and is arrested; the prosecution is immediately commenced, D— receives the reward of his treachery, and Morton was executed in a few days after.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER VIII.

Public Executions ; Earl Ferrers—Alderman Sayre—The celebrated Chevalier d'Eon—Mons. de Morande—Dr. Dodd—An Anecdote—Barbarous Punishment in Scotland—Singular Law with regard to women—Prohibitions against Swearing—Hunting of Animals—The Lord Chancellor—Free Masons—Strict Observations of the Letter of the Law.

ENGLISH Liberty would actually be what it appears to the ignorant, a mere chimera, if the laws of that country did not act with the same vigour against the nobility as the people.

An infraction of them, whether it is in regard to property or life, is punished without any respect to the rank or fortune of the culprit : and although no bounds are set by the constitution to the mercy of the king, yet he never protects those criminals who, surrounded with titles and dignities, imagine that they are thereby sheltered from the punishment which the law denounces against their actions. It is indeed certain that in England, as in all other countries, a thousand machines may be but motion, and a multitude of intrigues practised to blind the eyes of the monarch, and procure pardon for criminals of distinction ; this is a custom which neither the sovereign nor the legislature can abolish without overturning the constitution.

I shall produce some examples of this impartiality from the history of our times, a method which

I intend

I intend to pursue as often as possible in the course of this work, and which is undoubtedly more entertaining and instructive, than long and fatiguing arguments. Among other advantages it will enable the reader to supply my incapacity by allowing him to form his own judgment on facts, for the authenticity of which I pledge myself.

Every body knows that after the battle of Culloden many noblemen were executed for their attachment to the house of Stuart: but for more than a century before that no peer of the realm had been condemned to death for any other crime than treason.

The earl of Ferrers, uncle to the present lord of that name, about twenty-eight years since offered a melancholy instance of such a case by murdering his steward, not in the heat of a passion, but in a cool premeditated manner. As he lived some time after the wound, his Lordship sent for a surgeon, who finding that it was mortal, informed a magistrate of the circumstance. The earl was upon this arrested and carried to the tower of London. As every citizen has a right to be tried by his equals, and the peers of England are a distinct body, the House of Lords are consequently sole judges in this kind of process. On these occasions they are all summoned, not as legislators, but as members of a judicial tribunal, and their assemblies are not convoked in the usual place, but in Westminster-hall, which is more commodious on account of its situation and immense space.

This was the august tribunal which took cognizance of the process against lord Ferrers, and condemned him by an unanimous decree. The laws ordain that the body of a murderer shall be anatomised, and this circumstance afflicted him in a very sensible manner. He heard his sentence pronounced with the utmost composure; but when that

that part which mentioned his dissection was read, he instantly exclaimed "God forbid!" It was in vain that he requested to be beheaded instead of being hanged on a gibbet; he desired to die in the tower where his ancestor the earl of Essex had been executed, but he was told that he must prepare to suffer at Tyburn in common with the vilest criminals.

The only favour they would grant him was to allow the use of his own carriage in the journey instead of being drawn in a cart: an indulgence which Dodd and others afterwards experienced.

He accordingly repaired to Tyburn in a mourning coach; his horses covered with crape, and his servants clothed in black. On his arrival he mounted the scaffold, and was obliged to remain there a whole hour with the rope about his neck. This period being elapsed, one of the sheriffs who accompanied him mentioned that his time was expired, and took leave of him. His Lordship on this immediately took a leap; the scaffold was removed, and the body left suspended in the air.

The corpse was afterwards carried to Surgeon's Hall, where it was exposed naked for three whole days, that the law might be fulfilled in every point. The hangman shewed the rope with which he had been executed, and such is always the folly of the people, that many thousands paid a shilling a piece for the sight of it. The body was afterwards deposited in the family vault, and the brother of the defunct immediately took the title.

The peeresses enjoy the same privileges in regard to trial as the peers themselves, and it was in recollection of this that an illustrious princess, thrown into prison a few years since, and dubious of her destiny, exclaimed, "Why am I not in my own dear country, where my trial would have been

"conducted

* The late queen of Denmark,

"conducted publicly, and by the most noble judges!"

It was in the year 1776 that the duchess of Kingston was accused of bigamy, while she was at Rome. At the first news of it, she immediately departed for England, notwithstanding she was sick, and even obliged to perform the journey in a litter. Soon after her arrival her trial commenced. I had the satisfaction of being a witness to this singular spectacle, which not a little resembled the pomp with which divine service is performed in *catholic countries*. Foreigners ridiculed the English for treating such trifling matters with so much importance, while engaged in an unfortunate war; it was however impossible, without overturning the very foundation of the constitution, to refuse to hear her accuser, or deny herself the privilege of defending her cause before that tribunal which her rank assigned to her. The trial was public and attended with the usual ceremonies, but with an uncommon concourse of people.

The president whom the king appoints for the occasion, bears the title of the Lord High Steward, a very eminent dignity, and which ends with the trial. The chancellor was invested with this dignity, perhaps the greatest in the world, and presided holding a long taper wand in his hand as a mark of his office. Westminster Hall, the height of which is superior to most churches, allowed ample room for the amphitheatres which were erected on the occasion. The seats and boxes appropriated to the royal family, the peeresses, the members of the House of Commons, &c. were covered with the richest tapestry. It seemed to be a general *gala*; the passages were guarded with soldiers, who do not usually appear on these occasions; the peers, to the number of almost two hundred, the bishops and the judges in their robes, formed a semicircle

semicircle, together with the high-steward at the foot of a throne erected for the king, although he is never present, formed altogether a superb and elegant appearance. At some distance a large table was placed for the secretaries of this great tribunal, and the centre of the circle was reserved for the accusers and accused.

The duchess had two of her women attending on her, a physician, a surgeon, an apothecary, a secretary, and six advocates. She was dressed in black, and her conduct, which was at once firm, and noble throughout the whole, gained her the admiration of all the spectators. She herself addressed the assembly with an inimitable dignity. Nevertheless she was convicted by the peers, who gave their judgment by rising up one after the other, and with their hands on their breasts declaring *on their honours* that she was guilty. The youngest baron begins, and they rise in order of rank and creation.

The punishment inflicted by the law of bigamy, is a red hot iron applied to the hand; the nobility however are exempted by an ancient privilege. The counsel for the duchess claimed this as a right, and the adverse party denied it: it was then that for the first time this unfortunate woman seemed to lose her resolution. She fainted and was carried away. She was at last allowed this favour, and escaped with a reprimand from the Lord High Steward, who concluded with an observation "that this was the last time when she could experience this indulgence."

Such was the conclusion of this singular process, which lasted six days. These six days seemed to be a festival to the whole nation. Although the court did not sit till ten o'clock, the hall was full by five in the morning. There were even ladies who repaired thither by break of day, magnificently dressed

and ornamented with jewels, and remained till five in the evening. As it happened in the summer, a period when all the gentry are in the country, thousands were continually arriving from the remotest corners of the kingdom. Those who had not tickets, offered for them twelve, fifteen, and even twenty guineas a piece. A lady, who after all her endeavours could not procure one, being quite inconsolable for the bad success of her attempts, avowed in company that she would sooner sacrifice fifty guineas than not be a spectator. The duchess, on hearing of this ardent curiosity, observed, "If this lady longs so much to be in the hall, I am disposed to resign my place to her for nothing, and she will not then fail to see and be seen by all the world." She well knew that it was only the vanity of shewing herself that tormented her countrywoman, and not a wish to behold a scene which, although very interesting, had nothing agreeable in it. This kind of trial is peculiar to the nobility and costs an immense sum to government.

It was also during my stay in London that Sayre the banker was accused of high-treason. This gentleman, who is a native of America, is well known in the north of Germany, by his intrigues there in favour of his countrymen. He is now settled at George-Town in Maryland. He was an inhabitant of London, and in a high reputation, when he had the audacity, at the beginning of the American contest, to attempt the execution of a project at once rash and imprudent. As almost the whole nation was discontented during that unfortunate war, he resolved to make himself master of the person of the king, carry him to the Tower, and keep him prisoner there until he had agreed to whatever was proposed to him. For this purpose he makes the necessary arrangements. He communicates part of his plan to Richardson, a captain

captain of the guards, and requests his assistance. That officer promises to consider of it, and repairs instantly to the earl of Rochford, one of the secretaries of state, to whom he recounts the singular proposition that had been made to him, and confirms the truth of it by an oath. As this attempt was high treason, that minister imagined that it was his duty to take immediate cognizance of it. He accordingly issues a warrant, Sayre is apprehended and conducted to his house.

In the mean time the secretary of state having sent for Sir John Fielding, and procured the attendance of Richardson, began the examination; the prisoner however was too cunning to say any thing before the arrival of his counsel to whom he had found means to send a note, informing him of his situation.

He was not mistaken in the zeal of that gentleman, who, throwing himself into a carriage as soon as he received the letter, made so much haste that he arrived a few minutes after the prisoner. He immediately requests to speak with Mr. Sayre; but the minister, on being informed of his business, refuses to permit an interview. This answer provokes the barrister, who immediately sends word that he *insisted* on seeing his client, and *must* speak to him that very moment. What recompense would the boldness of this gentleman have met with in any other country? Such a message to a secretary of state armed with such an extensive authority, in his own house, and in an affair of high treason! the most moderate would without doubt have ordered him to be thrown out of the window.

In England, where no body is above the laws, and where the most powerful dare not to infringe them with impunity, they regulate their matters in another manner.

The

The counsel was immediately introduced, and he publicly informs the prisoner, that he ought not to answer to any interrogatories in that house. Sayre on this turning towards his Lordship observes, that he will follow the opinion of his lawyer, and that, as it was entirely useless, he beseeched him to ask no more questions. On this the minister commits him to the Tower. Bail is offered and refused. However, at the end of six days he is set at liberty, as the policy of the state did not then admit of his trial. Sayre however had no motives to prevent him from prosecuting the minister: he accuses him of having arrested him without sufficient cause, affirms that the warrant was illegal, commences an action for false imprisonment, and a verdict is found against the secretary of state for three thousand pounds.

The power of the laws and the extent of English liberty was never better illustrated than in the suit between the count de Guerchy and the chevalier d'Eon. As a particular account of this has never reached Germany, and the chevalier, with whom I was intimately acquainted, is not unknown there, it may not be improper here to mention some of the characteristic traits of this singular being.

D'Eon had already distinguished himself by his military and political talents at the courts of Warsaw and St. Petersburg, when he was sent to London with count de Guerchy. In the year 1763, in quality of secretary of legation. Soon after his arrival, the count, who was ambassador, from France, returned to spend a few months at Paris, confiding the care of every thing to the chevalier, who was invested with the rank and title of minister plenipotentiary at the court of London. His transactions in that station having given great umbrage to the ambassador, he on his return testified his displeasure. This was soon followed by an entire rupture.

Both

Both of them complain to their court. The friends of the count were more powerful at Versailles than those of the chevalier; perhaps he had also the better cause; however, it is certain that his antagonist was disgraced. Thinking that he had now no occasion to preserve moderation, the chevalier soon broke all those ties by which he was connected with France. His resentment, which knew no bounds, made him even discover those state secrets which had been confided to his honour. He spoke openly concerning the late peace, affirmed that it had been purchased for money, mentioned the traitors, and even the sums that had been paid. A speech of this kind must necessarily excite the most lively sensations. It was not however thought proper to institute a suit against him, and his assertion was treated as an atrocious calumny. D'Eon, to silence such infamous reports, offered to adduce irrefragable testimony, and besides to particularise the very sums that had been sent from France to England for that purpose. This intrepid conduct immediately abashed those concerned in this dishonourable affair, and d'Eon was induced to concealment by a proposition not very ungrateful to the deranged state of his finances. It is well known that after this he lived several years in London perfectly at his ease.

But his situation was no ways to be envied. The court of St James's and its partizans hated him as a traitor, who had been instigated to perfidy by the most venal motives. The people despised him for deviating from his resolution on account of the most dishonourable impulse; they said that he ought to have told all or nothing. The just resentment of the court of France, which left him every thing to apprehend, added not a little to his solicitude. He was obliged to be always on his guard; and was so fearful of being carried off, that he never went out

on an evening unless accompanied by his friends. By this prudent conduct he frustrated many projects, which were formed against him with equal art and boldness.

I shall not pretend to decide whether it is true or not that they tried to take him off by poison. It is however certain that he complained loudly of the count de Guerchy, who he said had made such an attempt in his own house.

He himself applied to a justice of the peace, gave information of the circumstance, swore to the facts, and promised to adduce proofs. This was in order to commence a criminal process against the count, who unfortunately thought himself, as ambassador from a peaceful monarch, entirely out of the reach of the laws. He even ridiculed such of his friends as testified any inquietude on the occasion, imagined that his rank and high favour at court would entirely shelter him from prosecution. He was however cited before a justice, and according to custom was obliged to appear in person. This supposed insult put him into a rage, and he immediately went to the minister, whose uneasiness not a little disconcerted the poor count, who measuring the power of a king of England, by that of his own sovereign, expected nothing but a little pleasantry from the secretary of state. The term when he was obliged to make his appearance was short; every thing that could be done in his favour was put in practice to prolong it, and thus the minister plenipotentiary of his most christian majesty gained sufficient time to leave London in the night and escape to Calais. The chagrin occasioned by this sad catastrophe brought him in a short time to the grave.

The chevalier d'Eon remained in London till the year 1777, when some doubts having arisen concerning the sex of this extraordinary person, several policies

policies were opened, and a prodigious number of betts made on the subject. Piqued at these doubts, the chevalier mentioned in the public papers that he would satisfy the whole world whether he was male or female on a certain day; and accordingly fixed the time and place.

It was a coffee-house in the city that he appointed for the exhibition of this singular scene to the curious. The concourse was prodigious. D'Eon appears clothed in the uniform of a captain of the French cavalry, and decorated with the cross of St. Louis. He addresses himself to the assembly, and informs them that he is of the sex whose appearance he assumes, and that he comes prepared to prove his assertions either with his *sword* or his *cane*.

The boldness of his speech had different effects on the auditory, some praised and others laughed at it; but the greatest part of the spectators heard with the utmost coldness the menace of the chevalier, who, perceiving that no person chose to accept the challenge, returned in triumph. It is nevertheless certain that, to determine the betts, which amounted to almost a million sterling, he was promised very large sums of money if he would unequivocally unveil the mystery. I myself know that they offered him thirty-thousand pounds sterling, which they were prepared to pay in ready money. Such a proposition was very tempting; and I am sure the chevalier would have disclosed the secret for a great deal less, if he had not been obliged to submit to the indelicate inspection of such a number of people.

As he refused to accede to the proposal, this uncertainty continued till his departure for France, when two of his countrymen swore that the chevalier was a woman, and this determined many wagers. But those who had large stakes would not allow their testimony was valid, although one of them

them who pretended to be a physician, affirmed, that he had cured d'Eon of a certain disease; in fine, the generality of mankind are not even now agreed concerning the sex of this singular being.

Would it be childish to believe that a person, who by nature and inclination had such a near resemblance to our sex, belonged to the other? The habit of a woman, which the chevalier is now obliged to wear by order of the king of France, and which is disgusting to him, cannot prove any thing. The farces daily acted in courts are so various, and the occasion of them often so impenetrable, that the change of dress is not to be regarded. I confess that every circumstance in the life of this singular person is wonderful and extraordinary. After having been guilty of the most perfidious treason against his native country, and when the bastille seemed ready to entomb him in one of its dungeons, he not only receives his pardon, but a pension of four thousand livres a year, and that to at a time when, entirely forgotten, he could no longer hurt the court of France. It is pretended that he lived in great intimacy with Louis XV. who kept up a constant correspondence with him, and that it was on condition of delivering up his letters that he escaped punishment. But how can we reconcile this circumstance with his treason? It is possible that the French minister should have been ignorant of his sex, when at thirty-six years of age he employed him at the court of London? The success of a ministerial intrigue, it is true, has often depended on a disguise of this kind; but it is inconceivable that in the present times, and during the administration of a duke de Choiseul, the court of Versailles would have nominated a woman for her minister plenipotentiary to a great nation such as England. It is also certain that d'Eon entered the college of Mazarine at Paris at twelve years of age, and was educated

educated there. A gentleman who is at present a considerable merchant in London, and who was brought up at the same seminary with him, betted twenty thousand pounds that his school-fellow was a man. His reasons were undoubtedly convincing. The mother and the relations must certainly have known the sex of d'Eon. What mother could have been so inconsiderate as to leave a young girl at the age of twelve to the mercy of so many boys? A miracle only could conceal such a circumstance, and it seems that this miracle happened. Neither the amusements of a forward child nor the suppositions of the masters ever made this strange discovery. D'Eon was even admitted in London to a society, which, whatever regard in other respects it may evince towards the female sex, yet never entrusts them with their secrets. In the year 1770 he was deputy grand master of the French lodge of free masons, a body which at that time were quoted as a model on account of the strictness of their rules.

I have thought it my duty to state my sentiments on this singular affair, because it seems to me never to have been before considered in the same point of view. My own knowledge, considering my intimacy with the chevalier, is very limited, and I think that the uncertainty of all impartial persons is fully justified until authentic proofs shall hereafter tear away the veil which still conceals the truth.

I cannot conclude the history of the chevalier without saying something of his antagonist Mons. de Morande; a person well known by the singularity of his adventures. Having made some mistake at Paris for which he was sent to prison, he went to England on his release, and published a book, which at that time made a great noise, entitled *Le Gazetier Cuirasse*, or *Scandalous Anecdotes of the Court of France*, written in a free country, at hundred miles distant from the Bastile. Soon after

tha

this
and
ing
was
sent
conc
year
luck
befo
with
of t
T
sacri
place
affec
prese
of d
was
able
his d
coun
tears.
" he
" it
" I
T
with
friend
the f
deper
recom
whole
sentec
were
perfor
in his
prime
thing

this he wrote the *Memoirs of the Countess Dubarry*, and sent a copy of the manuscript to herself, offering to suppress it for 2000 louis d'ors. That lady was so much afraid of the publication of it that she sent the celebrated Beaumarchais to London, who concluded an agreement with the author, for a yearly pension payable in London, which was luckily for him signed by Louis XV. a few weeks before his demise. This gentleman was one of the witnesses who were examined concerning the sex of the chevalier,

The fate of the unfortunate Dr. Dodd, who was sacrificed to the laws of his country, is worthy of a place in this work. I myself was witness to two affecting scenes occasioned by this event, for I was present at his trial, and attended also when sentence of death was pronounced against him. This man was of a noble and interesting appearance, respectable on account of his profession, his eloquence, and his distinguished talents. The judges, the jury, the counsel, the spectators, all the world was bathed in tears. The prisoner also wept. "I despise," said he, "that stoic firmness which condemns death; it is a pagan virtue, in which I would not glory. I love life, and I am sorry to die."

This unfortunate man always flattered himself with the hope of a pardon, and his numerous friends interested themselves for this purpose with the same warmth as if the safety of the nation depended on his life. The jury who tried him recommended him to the mercy of the sovereign; whole corporations, the city of London itself presented a petition in his favour; the newspapers were every day filled with the good actions he had performed, and quoted the most interesting passages in his sermons. His writings were collected and reprinted; the poets sung his praises, and in fine every thing was practised to excite the sympathy of the

H

nation

nation for a criminal so much beloved. Having succeeded, his partizans drew up a petition to the king, and never before was such a one seen in England. It was carried by a porter who bent under the load, for it took up twenty-nine yards of parchment and was signed by twenty-three thousand housekeepers. It is however remarkable that the great merchants and other people of condition would not subscribe to this petition, which did not succeed, as the council resolved that it was not proper on this occasion to extend the royal clemency.

Dodd himself attempted to procure the commiseration of Lord Mansfield, by a letter couched in the most affecting language. As it never had been printed, I shall insert it here.

“ My Lord,

“ But a few days—and the lot of the most unhappy of created beings will be decided for ever!
 “ I know the weight of your Lordship’s opinion.
 “ It is that which will undoubtedly decide, whether
 “ I am to die an ignominious death, or drag out
 “ the rest of my life in dishonourable banishment.
 “ O my Lord! do not refuse to hear what I in
 “ my humility dare to oppose to the severity of the
 “ laws.

“ I feel how frightful my crime is; the sentence
 “ which condemns me is but too just: I however
 “ flatter myself, that, amidst all the reproaches
 “ cast against me on account of my crime, it will
 “ still be remembered how useful my charitable
 “ endeavours have been to that very society which
 “ I have injured. I ask for nothing but the preservation of my life, a life which I shall drag out
 “ in dishonour and perhaps in misery! Have
 “ compassion, my Lord, on a man covered with
 “ infamy, without fortune, and without resource,
 “ but

" but not however without fear at casting his eyes
 " towards the abyfs of eternity !

" However great that misery which will be my
 " lot, yet still allow me to live. That very misery
 " under which I shall languish the rest of my days,
 " will forewarn all those who were witnesses of it,
 " to beware of indulging their passions, and to
 " guard against a fatal vanity and a spirit of dissipa-
 " tion.

" For the last time, I conjure you, my Lord, to
 " suffer me to live ; and when you see me passing
 " from the frightful dungeon which now encloses
 " me, to an ignominious exile, be assured that
 " justice will be sufficiently satisfied by the suffer-
 " ings of him who is,

" My Lord,

" Your Lordship's

Newgate,

June 11, 1777.

" Most humble suppliant,

" WILLIAM DODD."

This letter did not prevent Lord Mansfield from giving his opinion, that Dodd ought not to be pardoned. The reasons which he adduced were convincing : Those very reasons also inclined the king to refuse a pardon, in 1783, to Ryland the celebrated engraver, whom he loved and patronised.

The friends of Dr. Dodd seeing that all their solicitations were in vain, formed the project of restoring him to life after his execution. The delinquent was in all human probability made acquainted with the scheme, as he besought the hangman, after he mounted the ladder, that he would not *draw his feet* ; a ceremony which is very common, and which the spectators themselves often do out of compassion. After he had hung the usual time his friends took the body, as is always allowed when the criminal has not been a murderer. A mourning-coach was in readiness to receive it: it was placed

in a coffin without a lid, and brought with the utmost speed to the house of one of his acquaintances, where a physician used all the secrets of his profession for its resuscitation; but all his efforts were unsuccessful.

As my sole intention in recounting these transactions is to give, by an authentic recital of facts, a just idea of the present state of the laws of England, and the mode of putting them in execution, I will here recite an event that happened in London in the year 1778, and of which, to my great astonishment, I myself was a witness.

A young man of twenty years of age was condemned to death on the evidence of a highwayman, who accused him of being an accomplice. His own bad character and the testimony of the robber, accompanied with all the requisite proofs, seemed to leave no doubt of his guilt. The unhappy wretch was in consequence of this conducted in a cart to Tyburn, with some other criminals. He remained with the rope about his neck, according to the permission which the law allows, one whole hour at the foot of the gibbet. During that hour the culprit is permitted to say whatever he chooses, were he to utter high-treason against the sovereign, or inflame the people to a revolt, it would be illegal to prevent him. They think humanity requires that such an alleviation should be permitted to one who is about to be launched out of the world by a violent death. There are actually a great many men, who on this sad occasion experience a certain pleasure in communicating those sentiments with which they are affected. Lord Lovat, who after the rebellion in Scotland perished on a scaffold, made use of this privilege. He declared that George II. had no right to the crown, which belonged to the pretender alone; and added, it was with great pleasure
that

that he was then about to shed his blood for his lawful sovereign.

The young man whom I have just mentioned said not a word, but, trembling with fear, sat expectant of the awful period which was to put an end to his existence. The fatal moment at last arrives, and every thing is prepared; when his accuser, turning towards Villette the chaplain of Newgate, who is obliged to accompany the criminals to Tyburn, declares in the most solemn manner that the poor young man was innocent; and that he had been led away by the spirit of revenge to fabricate a story on purpose to procure his death. This declaration made all the spectators tremble; but the ordinary, who was accustomed to these kind of scenes, answered coldly, that it was now too late to retract. In the mean time the people began to murmur, and some respectable persons addressed themselves to the under-sheriff, who officiated in the absence of his principal.

He having heard nothing of the confession, was about to give the fatal signal; the conductor of the cart had his whip uplifted in the air, and the cries and prayers of the unhappy wretch were still sounding in the ears of the assistants, when all on a sudden somebody cried, Halt! It was then represented to the under-sheriff, how barbarous it would be to allow an innocent man to perish. The emotions of this gentleman was equally great with his astonishment; for this was a case entirely new, and without any precedent. Every body was of opinion, that this young man ought not to be executed with the others: the cruel Villette alone insisted that he could not be saved, as the laws do not give to the officer the power of suspending the execution for a quarter of an hour. The sub-sheriff, who was acquainted with the laws, and fully convinced of the justice of Villette's observations, was now about to perform his duty with an aching heart. He

had almost given the fatal order, when the high-constable addresses him as follows: "In the name of God, sir, is it possible that you can give your consent to the death of this guiltless person?" "What can I, what shall I do?" replied he. "If you will delay the execution, I will instantly mount my horse and go to the king." He accordingly departs, without hearing the cruel pleasantries of the ordinary, who prognosticated that the journey would be unsuccessful.

Four other persons were joined in this sentimental embassy, who make towards Westminster in full gallop. Tyburn is distant from St. James's two English miles. They soon arrive at the palace; but the king was gone to Richmond, and all the ministers were gone to the country, it being then the height of summer.

They then instantly repair to the offices of the secretaries of state, hoping to find some person there of whom they could receive advice; but all the clerks shrugged up their shoulders saying, that the officer himself ought to know the extent of those powers which the law gave him. On this they return after an absence of an hour and an half, and relate the event of their unfortunate journey.

The execution of the other criminals had been suspended during this period, and Villette now insisted on the under-sheriff's giving the signal; menacing him at the same time with a criminal process, and affirming that, if he did not execute the culprit, the jailor of Newgate would not receive him back after he had been delivered over to the executioner. The high-constable on the other hand asserted the contrary, and did not cease to address him with the most masculine and persuasive eloquence, until he agreed to his request. The eight other criminals were immediately hanged; and the young man, who

had fainted with excessive joy, was carried back to Newgate.

The king being informed of this event, extended his clemency that very evening to the prisoner, who after having been conducted to the foot of the gibbet, found himself in a few hours free and happy. His Majesty also granted a pardon to the under-sheriff for having arrogated a power which he did not possess, and he received the praises of the whole nation for his boldness and humanity. To him might be applied the following line from Shakespeare :

“ To do a great right, he did a little wrong.”

They have not in England a set of men who can properly be stiled executioners. The hangman is a person employed by the sheriff: and he might gain his livelihood by any other occupation, for infamy is not there attached to his employment. It is contemptible indeed, but it is not dishonourable; and this contempt is not attached to the action of hanging, but to the idea of its proceeding from a sordid desire of gain; for, if he could procure no other person, the sheriff would be obliged to perform the duty himself. Of this there was an instance some years since, not indeed in London, but in the country. The two men appointed for this purpose happened to die, almost at the very moment when they were about to execute their office; and the sheriff not being able to procure any other, nor daring to delay the day or even the hour of execution, was obliged to put the criminal to death with his own hands.

The nobility in certain cases have the privileges of being beheaded: murderers, however, such as lord Ferrers, are denied this favour. A butcher, who by his trade is best qualified for this operation, is generally employed. The family of the culprit employ

him and for this purpose commonly make him a present of a hatchet with a silver handle.

They have in Scotland a singular law in regard to criminals who will not plead to the indictment. If the prisoner obstinately persists in silence, he is not publickly executed, nor his estate confiscated, but a heavy and cruel punishment immediately follows. Of this they give him an exact detail on the last day of the session, requesting him either to declare himself guilty, or to enter on his defence, and observing, that then is the time to speak, as it will afterwards be attended with no advantage. If he still continues silent, the law condemns him to the following punishment. Being conducted to a dungeon, he is stripped naked and extended on a kind of a tomb-stone, the feet being placed higher than the head. In this posture, which he is obliged constantly to retain, different parts of his body are loaded with weights of iron and stone; he is supplied with bread and water alternately, and in such a manner that the day on which he eats he does not drink, and on that on which he drinks he is not allowed to eat. This regimen is continued till his death. After the rebellion in Scotland in the year 1745*, there were many examples of this kind: one hundred and forty-one wretches resigned themselves to this horrible species of death, to preserve their fortune to their families.

In England there are still a few of those singular laws which evince the barbarity of remote ages. For example, a husband is permitted to sell his wife, provided she gives her consent. I myself was witness to a transaction of this kind in the city of Worcester. A journeyman conducted his dear moiety to the market with a rope about her neck, as the law prescribes, and exactly in the same manner as an ox or an ass. A shoemaker, who was her lover,

appeared

* The author here has been grossly misinformed.

appeared according to appointment, and the bargain was soon made. The price of the woman was five pounds.

The laws in general are not favourable to the fair sex in England, yet notwithstanding this, the women reign there with a more absolute dominion than in any other country. They know how to make both the men and the laws bend beneath the power of their charms, and turn to advantage those very things which are least in their favour.

As soon as the marriage is concluded, the fortune of the woman is entirely at the disposal of the husband; but the moment that he has taken possession of it, he becomes liable to her debts, and is obliged to pay them: so that his dear wife may make him spend many an uneasy quarter of an hour. I knew a woman who, although a foreigner, knew but too well how to make use of this fatal privilege. She and her husband lived very unhappily together; and their unfortunate union became still more miserable by their continual broils. In this desperate situation she conceived the design of parting from him, and for this purpose contracted several fresh debts: what which she wished for accordingly happened; for the poor man being unable to pay them, was conducted to prison.

However it is still worse to be arrested a few days after marriage, for the former debts of a wife, which in that country a husband espouses with her. Sensible people, therefore, take great care to make the necessary inquiries; for many women never think of marriage until they have contracted debts which become troublesome to them. The bridegroom has often been known to be conducted from the nuptial bed to a prison.

A German experienced a singular adventure of this kind. A rich widow, who at the death of her husband inherited his fortune and his debts, which were both very considerable, delayed the settlement

of his affairs from day to day, till at last she was on the point of being arrested. While in this alarming situation she happened to see a young German whose figure pleased her, but whose dress seemed to announce that fortune had acted the part of a stepmother to him. In consequence of this, she resolved to make him an uncommon proposition: It was that of giving him a thousand pounds in ready money, provided he would instantly marry her; at the same time informing him, that in a few days he would be arrested for the debts which she would otherwise have been obliged to pay. He instantly closes with the proposal, to which was added the promise of an annuity of three hundred pounds a year during his confinement, and a present of five hundred pound, sterling, on his quitting England after his release. The lady on her part engages to fulfil these conditions, and he on his, to renounce all the rights of a husband.

Necessity made him agree to every thing proposed. As the law against clandestine marriages had not then taken place, my countryman espouses the widow immediately, receives the stipulated sum, is carried to the King's bench, where he remains quiet and happy, and returns to his native country with a little fortune, after two years imprisonment.

To the end that the submission which women owe after marriage, may be the better impressed on the minds of their wives, the English have a law which condemns to a particular kind of death, any woman who is convicted of murdering her lawful husband. On these occasions they are not hanged, but burnt. However, as they are the declared enemies of punishment that favours of cruelty, they strangle them before they reduce the bodies to ashes; but the preparation is so frightful, that it
always

always produces the same effect as the punishment itself. This crime is however very rare. The murder of a husband is regarded in England as a species of high treason; it is accordingly denominated petty treason.

The laws allow so much for the subjugation which a woman is supposed to be under, in respect to her husband, that if she commits any crime in concert with him, she needs not be afraid of being punished, nor even of being tried for the offence. They say that the duty which she owes to her husband, forces her to obey him. According to the same principle, the husband is obliged to answer for all the faults of his wife; it is he, and not her, who is prosecuted.

Among the number of regulations in that state, two may be reckoned, which, If I am not much deceived, exist no where but in England. No traveller has yet made mention of them, and even very few of the English themselves know that such are in force. Would any one imagine, in a country, where the people swear every moment, and where oaths form a part of the gallantry of the sailors and the populace, that they were prohibited by law? This statute was enacted at a time when the Puritans were at the head of affairs. As it is impossible, since bigotry has ceased to infect that island, to enforce this law in the present day, and because it would be indecent to repeal such an act, the magistrates have agreed to be indulgent to those who infringe it. They cannot however refuse to punish any person, when an informer, by means of an oath convicts him of having incurred the penalty. To prevent, however, the multiplication of this sort of accusations, they have fixed the fine at the moderate rate of one shilling.

The

The second law is against those who treat animals with cruelty. Being always passive, it greatly redounds to the humanity of an enlightened nation, to protect dumb creatures from the barbarity of their masters. These accusations are very frequent, and no indulgence is shewn to the guilty. The pecuniary mulct is from five to ten shillings, and some times even more, at the discretion of the magistrate, and according to the exigence of the case. It proceeds from this that they treat animals almost as if they were reasonable creatures, and that horses and dogs experience the mild usage so much boasted of by the English.

Cock-fighting, of which I shall speak hereafter, is not liable to any punishment, and one would think that this was an exception to the former law. The two champions, however, encounter upon equal terms.

One may also place that body of people called constables, among the number of singularities with which that country abounds. It would be doing wrong to confound these with the officers of justice. They are all reputable tradesmen, having an occupation and a dwelling-house, whom the law invests with this authority to watch over the order and security of the public. the office of constable is reckoned among the parochial employments incident to all the householders in the parish. No person can refuse to undertake it, although there is not any salary annexed to compensate for the trouble and attendance. The law fixes the duration of this charge for one year: the more opulent inhabitants generally employ a substitute, for which they pay a certain sum. The constables never arrest debtors; a class of men called bailiffs are employed in that occupation. Neither do they risk their lives against highway robbers; the thief-takers, who are paid

paid b
certain

To
of int
gener
arrest
lowed
their
assist
whom
A per
looked
munit

The c
a stat
blazon
subje

Th
son, a
oblige
severi
judge
decisi
of eq
the so
orpha
of thi
inter
is alw
t, as
act m
n beh

Th
Peers,
nan
Engla
nean

paid by government, and act under the controul of certain magistrates, are retained for that purpose.

To these two latter employments a certain degree of infamy is attached: the bailiffs in particular are generally hated, and woe to them, if they ever arrest any one illegally, or assume powers not allowed by law! If a prisoner happens to escape from their hands, the people try all in their power to assist him. Their conduct towards the constables, whom they commonly esteem, is entirely different. A person taken into custody by one of them, is looked upon as a disturber of the peace of the community, and every body endeavours to secure him. The constable carries in his hand, while on duty, a staff on which the arms of England are emblazoned; on producing of which, all the king's subjects are obliged to support him.

The lord chancellor represents, in his own person, a court armed with high authority. He is obliged, in certain cases, to temper the too great severity of the laws, and to take care that the judges are not only just, but also reasonable in their decisions. His tribunal is accordingly called a court of equity. In it there are no juries: he himself is the sole judge. He is also the guardian of all the orphans in the kingdom; so that, in the discharge of this duty, he is frequently occupied about the interests of the lowest class of citizens. His court is always open, and there are not any vacations in it, as in the others: thus the famous *habeas corpus* act may at all times, and at all hours, be sued out in behalf of any one.

The chancellor is also speaker of the House of Peers, an office which must always be filled by a man of distinguished abilities. The ministers of England are frequently employed and disgraced by means of cabals and intrigues: but it is necessary that

that the talents of a person elevated to that high employment should never be equivocal.

Although the party in opposition are for the most part constrained to yield to the more numerous partisans of the court, yet it often happens that they propose regulations which are acceded to, while those of the court party are rejected, because the minister does not always think it proper to shew his strength.

It is said that, when he himself does not make the proposition, he for the most part chooses to be passive, and in such a case is it no mortification to him when a bill is rejected. I was witness to an instance of this kind, which at the time it happened made some noise. The society of free masons, which is exceedingly numerous in England, and has in the capital alone two hundred and six lodges, in the year 1771, projected a scheme in favour of their establishment, the purport of which was to build a grand general lodge in the neighbourhood of London; they also intended to augment the statutes of their order, and to give them the force of laws. In consequence of this, they presented a petition to the House of Commons, praying to be allowed the privileges of a corporation. This request was delivered and seconded by members of parliament, who were at the same time free-masons and of the court party; and they lavished on this occasion, all the eloquence which a zeal for the brotherhood inspired them with.

The heads of the opposition were entirely silent, and the free-masons of Great Britain already imagined that they had effected their purpose; when one of those unquiet and discontented men, so common among those islanders, got up and observed, that it would be ridiculous to grant them such great privileges before they had been fully apprised of the design, and until parliament had received an

exact

exact detail of their rules and interior regulations. This idea, which tended to discover all the mysteries of the institution, could not be complied with. The free-masons therefore withdrew their bill; and as they were not empowered to purchase any place in the name of the society, without the sanction of parliament, they were contented to build a superb edifice in the metropolis, where they now hold their assemblies.*

However ingenious the English may be in quibbling away the meaning of the laws, when they make against them, they are nevertheless always apprehensive of a direct infringement. This fear is more prevalent in the rich and powerful than among the common people: every where else it is exactly the reverse. It is, for example, uncommonly rare to see a gentleman strike an inferior, although this is usual in other countries.

The ministers themselves, all-powerful as they are, very seldom invade the laws, even in trifles, although there be no danger of a complaint against them. It is sufficient that an act of parliament has regulated any thing to prevent one of them from acting in opposition to it. I myself became acquainted with many instances of this kind, in my first journey to England; and he was at that time tempted to consider as mere caprice, a punctilio founded on the most noble basis.

* Free-mason's Tavern, Queen-street.

CHAPTER IX.

*The facility of procuring Credit in England—Bailiffs—
—Singular Process on being arrested—Bail—Fleet and
King's-bench Prisons—Laws and Regulations—Debtors
—Acts of Grace—The Military obliged to submit to the
Civil Power—General Gansel.*

THE prisons for confining debtors in England, are such as might be expected in a nation which regards the powerful and sacred rights of humanity. They have no view of punishing debtors, by detaining them in custody; the intention is solely to keep them in a place of safety.

As it is extremely easy to contract debts in England, it must therefore necessarily follow, that the gaols are always full of prisoners. The poorest people, provided they are not common beggars, labour with the utmost assiduity to hire a small tenement, and become *house-keepers*, because, besides the convenience resulting from it, there are certain privileges annexed to such situation. In consequence of this, they prefer the most miserable cottage hired in their own name, to more convenient apartments in another house.

From this proceeds the great number of houses in London, which on this very account are as five to three in proportion to those of Paris, where all the inhabitants live heaped upon one another.

The

The national character is discovered in this very circumstance. It often happens, that a man has nothing in his little house, but a bed, a table, and some chairs, and yet, in quality of a *house-keeper*, he procures a certain degree of credit, and no one makes any difficulty in trusting him. The butchers, the bakers, the taylor, the shoe-makers, &c. &c. furnish him with whatever he may stand in need of, without requiring ready money; people in good circumstances generally make them wait till Christmas; a shorter time is however fixed for the poor; and whenever the debt amounts to the sum of *£* forty shillings, the creditor has a right to arrest the debtor.

Nothing is more easy than this. He goes to the sheriff's office, where there is no other person than a clerk; he informs him of his business, and asks for a writ. The clerk, whose duty it is to distribute these writs without making any inquiry, receives his fee, after having first made him kiss the bible, in the usual manner of taking an oath in England.

The bailiffs of whom I made mention in the preceding chapter, are afterwards employed, in virtue of their office to arrest the debtor. The people detest these men; and it is very natural, for they lead a lazy life, and inhabit good houses, which serve as temporary prisons. The creditor carries the writ to one of these, and gives him instructions. The bailiff conveys the prisoner to his house, where he remains for twenty-four hours: during this time, he makes use of every art, either to settle the matter or procure bail. If an accommodation does not take place in that time, the officer conducts him to prison: a fee however, properly applied, will often procure an indulgence for several days.

The

* By a late act, no one can be arrested for any debt below the sum of ten pounds.

The bail which the debtor is obliged to procure, when he neither chooses to pay the debt nor go to gaol, is of no service to the creditor. After this he may settle the suit amicably. Two housekeepers are necessary, when security is to be given for debt: if the sum is trifling, and the people are responsible, the officer is obliged to accept them. When the security does not appear to him sufficient, it is in his power to carry the prisoner to gaol, and refer the cognizance of the whole to the higher powers; who are by law obliged to accept the bail, when they swear in open court, that their property exceeds double the sum in contest, after all their debts are paid. When two housekeepers have made an oath in this manner, the lord chief justice of England himself cannot refuse them, notwithstanding they may have all the outward marks of poverty. Nothing can vitiate such bail, but a proof of perjury.

It is possible to abuse the wisest laws, and this is the case here. There are wretches who gain their livelihood entirely by this kind of traffic. They inhabit miserable houses in the suburbs, and all their moveables consist in a few old chairs and tables, which would not procure what would pay the expences, if they wanted to sell them. The German Jews distinguish themselves in this *honourable* kind of traffic; for even they, in quality of house-keepers, may be received.

The prisoners who wish to evade payment, or to procure their own liberty, purchase the services of these people, by a sum proportioned to the debt: this is generally ten pounds in the hundred.

If at the time appointed the debtor does not appear in person, the bail becomes fixed; but they take care to keep out of the way, and at the first notice put their goods in a place of safety. The process ends here, unless the creditor, wishing to sacrifice

her sum of money, arrests the Jews, to maintain them afterwards in prison.

Let those readers who are astonished that such abuses exist, recollect that I now speak of London, a place of which it is difficult for a stranger to form any conception. It often happens that the manners, the customs, and the laws themselves, are so intimately connected with the institution, that it is sometimes difficult to alter a part of this mighty edifice, without destroying the whole. It proceeds from this, that no remedy is applied to these glaring improprieties, which a foreigner imagines might be destroyed with such facility.

If a reform could be easily achieved, it is to be supposed that the greatest lawyers in the kingdom, such as a Thurlow and a Mansfield, would not long ere this have obviated such inconveniences in the discharge of their own duty?

Lord Mansfield has already been for many years lord chief justice of England. As a statesman he is not conspicuous, but he is an eloquent and engaging orator. Whoever listens to him in the court of king's bench, where he presides, will imagine it an oracle that speaks. He knows so well how to mingle wisdom and dignity together, that he appears like THEMIS herself in every cause where government is not immediately concerned. At the famous trial of lord George Gordon, this respectable magistrate entirely forgot that his house had been burnt, his library destroyed, and his precious collection of manuscripts lost for ever. He behaved like a judge whose sole duty it was to interpret the laws, and act according to their decisions. He treated this madman with a moderation and a mildness without parallel, collected all the proofs of his innocence, and gave a charge in his favour.

I was

I was witness to a singular scene betwixt this nobleman and a jew who was brought before him. This rogue, in the most impudent manner, offered himself as security for the sum of three hundred pounds sterling. My lord testified some doubt concerning the fortune of the conscientious son of circumcision; but he pulling from his pocket a number of bank notes, asked his lordship if he was acquainted with that kind of paper? The judge was silent, and the bail was admitted. It is probable that one of the rich jews who were present, had slipped the money into his hand.

By virtue of the act of *Habeas Corpus*, a debtor detained in prison may be removed, whenever he pleases, to any gaol in the kingdom. The writ costs about three pounds sterling, and the smallness of the sum induces all the great debtors to make use of this privilege, when they are able to raise so much, and do not expect to be speedily liberated.

As there are two prisons, called the King's bench and the Fleet, which are peculiar to England, and have nothing similar to them in Europe, they usually make choice of one of these. The latter is situated in the middle of the city; the other in St. George's Fields. No traveller that I am acquainted with, has ever given a particular account of these singular and uncommon gaols. They never, indeed have been mentioned among us but in some English romances, which are very justly rejected as so many fictions and improbabilities. So true it is that we have only a few vague ideas of a nation concerning which we never cease to speak; which we endeavour to imitate in almost every thing, and which is so very near to us.

It may be said, that these prisons are two republics existing in the bosom of the metropolis, and entirely independent of it. The situation, and the largeness of the first, render it more commodious

han the other. Its boundaries are marked by a wall which contains a prodigious extent of ground. Within its circumference, a great number of houses are built for the accommodation of the prisoners; a garden where they may walk, a place where they may play at fives, public houses where beer and wine are sold, a coffee house, shops, &c. &c.

All the mechanics who follow trades which do not require much room nor long preparation, are allowed here to exercise their respective avocations, which they denote by signes at their doors and windows. You may find taylors, shoe-makers, wig-makers, &c. &c. who not only work for the other prisoners, but also for their customers elsewhere, who still continue to employ them. They generally make their families stay with them, and live very comfortably. Those who are at liberty sometimes surpass in number those who are confined, and the whole often amounts to two or three thousand. There is no guard but at the entrance; the greatest liberty reigns within; neither bars, nor bolts, nor irons, nor gaoler are to be perceived; nothing, in one word, to denote a prison.

As their doors are never locked up, the inhabitants may divert themselves for whole nights together.

They have even been known to give balls and concerts. The free-masons have a lodge here. It was in the King's bench that Wilkes was, in the year 1769, received as a member of that society.

The gates are open from seven o'clock in the morning till nine at night. Any person impelled either by curiosity or business, may go and come during those hours, without being asked any questions. During Wilkes's imprisonment, the avenues were continually choaked up by the number of carriages that were bringing visitors to him.

It sometimes happens, that persons afraid of being arrested run to this place as to an asylum, where they

they remain with some of the prisoners whom they are acquainted with, and never depart till they have made terms with their creditors, or taken some other necessary steps. For, according to the constitution of this singular commonwealth, the persons who fly there for refuge, cannot in any manner be molested by those on the outside. The inside is a sanctuary, sacred to Liberty, where the bailiff dares not penetrate. He never goes further than the lobby, where he deposits his prisoners. Woe to him if he passes one step beyond it!

Some years since, one of those fellows having disguised himself, attempted to entice a widow woman towards the door, to arrest her. She had sought an asylum with her brother from the pursuit of a hard-hearted creditor, who wished to have her entirely in his power. In consequence of this, he had promised the officer a considerable sum of money in case of success. The bailiff risks the attempt, and is suspected. His retreat is cut off, and the usual signal given, on the appearance of a disturber of the peace of the society. All the inhabitants run out of their apartments, surround the unfortunate culprit, and demand the reason of his presumption. The writ, which they find in his pocket, explains the whole. Being unable to excuse himself he craves forgiveness; but to prevent similar attempts for the future, they resolve to make him an example. Accordingly a most singular punishment is resolved upon. They condemn him to eat the piece of parchment which contains the writ. The wretch is obliged to obey. It is cut into small pieces, and he is forced to swallow them, one after another.

In this prison there are apartments which would not disgrace a palace. These are generally occupied by rich people, who pay for them at a very dear rate: for nothing is more common than to see per-

sons w
this pl
and set
ary
confine
and gi
soners.

One
fashion
men,
delicat
where
that al

Th
the h
though
half a
buildi
here a

One
this pl
who h
cident

It w
excell
land;
grand
before
quired

Th
is one
alread
try, th
of his
does n
but th
ladies
about

sons

sons who possess considerable fortunes conducted to this place, who remain there as long as they please, and set out whenever they choose to make the necessary arrangements with their creditors. During their confinement the squander large sums of money, and give a great deal in charity to their fellow prisoners.

One may here see people dressed in the most fashionable clothes; assemblies of ladies and gentlemen, apartments elegantly furnished, and tables delicately served. The genteel and polite air every where visible, will never allow any one to think that all this is in a gaol.

The streets are called after particular names, and the houses properly numbered: a chamber is thought to be very cheap, when it can be hired for half a guinea. The coffee-house is a very good building and has a fine view of St. George's fields: here are all the newspapers are taken in.

One is almost sure of meeting good company at this place, as it is frequented by respectable persons, who have lost their fortunes by some unforeseen accidents.

It was here that the Rev. M. Horne wrote his excellent book on the government and laws of England; that Wilkes formed the plan of his present grandeur; and that lord Rodney lived for some time, before, by his exploits during the late war, he acquired the admiration of all Europe.

The unbecoming assemblage of the two sexes, is one of the greatest abuses of this prison. I have already said, that according to the laws of the country, the husband is obliged to answer for the debts of his wife, so that it is he only is arrested. One does not therefore meet with married women here, but there are plenty of widows, and unmarried ladies. These last, who are all priestesses of Venus, abound in great plenty, and sometimes exceed an hundred

hundred. One of these must be very disagreeable, if she does not find, on her arrival, several who will offer to share their apartments with her, and even their beds. When they are tired of each other they separate, and make a fresh choice. It often happens that they remain with their lovers after they are liberated; and it is not at all uncommon to see them forming connections here, which are only dissolved by death.

The voluptuous life which they lead in this goal, is also augmented by the continual visits which their lovers make them. However, notwithstanding the debauchery which generally prevails, it very rarely happens that it is attended with consequences punishable by the laws.

There are certain districts in the neighbourhood of the Kings-bench and the Fleet, called *rules*, which form a circuit of two English miles. The prisoner may, not only ramble but even live within these, whenever he can find security that he will not escape. It is remarked that no nation is so credulous as the English.

If a person wishes to have a companion in his walks, he need only add his friend's debt to his own, and procure an indemnification for both.

There are a great many agreeable gardens in the neighbourhood of the King's-bench, where tea and coffee are sold, and which in an afternoon are full of prisoners.

The marshall has upwards of three thousand a year, in salary and perquisites; for this he has very little to do, as he never troubles himself about the interior regulations: he is obliged, however, to give large security, as he becomes liable to the debts of all those who escape. About ten years since four prisoners, whose debts amounted to fifteen hundred pounds sterling, escaped by means of a hole in the garden wall. Before he paid so much money

the marshal bethought himself of a very singular expedient. He gave notice that he would give them fifty per cent. of the sums for which they had been confined, provided they would surrender themselves. Three of them actually acceded to the agreement, received the stipulated payment and returned to their former habitation.

To prevent similar attempts, they now take care to place guards around the outward wall, as several marshals have lost considerable fortunes, and fallen into the greatest poverty by their negligence. It is absolutely necessary, considering the manner in which debtors are treated in England, that some security should be given to the creditors, without which they would escape daily by means of corruption.

A crowd of people belonging to the prison, are always on watch at the door, which is constantly kept shut. All persons who either enter or depart from it, are obliged to pass through the room in which they wait. They examine the prisoners with the greatest minuteness on their arrival; they are not, however, permitted to visit the inside of the prison on any pretext whatever.

From what I have said, it will be readily believed, that no other place of confinement in the world, in the least resembles the King's-bench: as yet, however, I have not mentioned a single word concerning those particulars which more eminently characterise its republican form of government.

Although the care of this gaol is entirely confided to the marshal, yet he is not permitted to interfere in its internal regulations, and is very seldom seen within its walls. Every prisoner, whether man or woman, is a member of this commonwealth, and participates in all its privileges. They choose a lord chief justice, and a certain number of judges,
I who

who assemble once a week, and decide controversies.

In this court they terminate all quarrels, make laws concerning the police, hear all complaints, and pronounce final judgment: in a word, every thing is equally attended to as in a well governed community. Every one has a right to attend and plead his own cause. Those who are not able to express themselves with propriety in public, such as women, for example, employ others to relate their complaints, or defend their interests.

These proceedings may appear laughable to my readers; they are not, however, so to those who incur the displeasure of the judges. No monarch in the world can ever flatter himself to see his laws obeyed with such punctuality, as are the rules of this society. The most severe equity dictates the decrees, which are put in execution without a moment's delay. A colonel on half pay, who possessed great eloquence and abilities, for many years presided at this court, which he governed with the greatest propriety and decorum.

When there is a suit commenced on account of a debt contracted in the prison, the action is brought in all the proper forms. The debtor is summoned to appear, and is obliged to obey; for in case of refusal, he is dragged by force. Twelve jurymen being impanelled, as in the national courts, they give a verdict, after having made the necessary inquiries; and from this there is no appeal. If time is requested, it is allowed; if the debtor at its expiration still wishes to procrastinate, all his goods, even to his bed, are then sold for the benefit of the creditor. If he has no effects, his apartment is let out, till either his creditor is satisfied, or he finds some other way of discharging the obligation.

Even criminal processes, such as larceny, and breach of the peace, are here taken cognizance of.

On

On such occasions, the culprit, with a paper stuck on his breast describing his crime, is obliged to walk through every street, preceded by a herald, who with a loud voice assigns the reason of the punishment, and tells the inhabitants to beware of the delinquent. This inspires every one with hatred to the crime; and as the criminal cannot escape out of the narrow circle in which he may be said to vegetate, rather than to live, it happens very rarely that any one exposes himself to a humiliation so terrible in its consequences. It may therefore be said with truth, that the laws of this petty republic, and the punishments which they inflict, fully attain the end proposed.

The community also appoint and pay watchmen, who, according to the custom in all great towns, vary the hours during the night, and prevent fires and robberies; their occupation in the day-time is to proclaim the new laws and regulations, and in one word, to instruct the inhabitants in every thing that it is necessary for them to know.

The families, the friends, and the domestics of the prisoners, who settle among them, and all those who pass a single night within the walls, are under the protection of the society, and in case of being maltreated, are entitled to receive ample and immediate satisfaction: if they, on the other hand, happen to offend themselves, they are immediately turned out of the prison, and are never more permitted to enter it.

In cases of importance, the person aggrieved may cite another before the common court of justice; and if they are destitute of money, their fellow-prisoners make a subscription to defray the expenses.

According to the laws of England, a prisoner may commence a process on account of debt, without any expence: on depositing a few farthings in the

poor's box, a council is appointed to him gratis. This is called suing in *forma pauperis*. If he loses his cause the costs are added to the debt. The expences incurred in the court of King's-bench, by a process not very intricate, amount generally to about thirty pounds; in the marshalsea to five or six. The debt must always exceed ten pounds sterling, before a process can be instituted in the former court for its recovery.

I know not whether the privileges of this place are sanctioned by any law; they are however tolerated by the legislative power, and that, perhaps, as a compensation for the loss of liberty. But without attending to these considerations, the conduct of government in this case is extremely wise. What disorders, what complaints, what profligacies of every kind, would not ensue among so many prisoners, if a well regulated police did not remedy all these inconveniencies, by establishing order and harmony among them!

Without this they would be obliged to use the methods practised in France, where they treat debtors like so many criminals; crowd them in horrible dungeons, punish them by whipping, without distinction of age, rank or sex; and thus tormented by their equals, devoured by hunger, and eat up with vermin, leave the poor wretches to curse their existence!

What a contrast is here betwixt the two nations! nevertheless the French are not ashamed to treat the English as a cruel and savage people; and I am sorry to add, that some of my own* countrymen have not blushed to retail such absurdities, and judge of a whole nation by the misbehaviour of the populace.

There is a great number of shop-keepers established in the King's-bench prison, who trade in prohibited

* The Germans.

prohibited goods, which they sell at a very low price. Among other things they retail tea, coffee, brandy, soap, and candles, which they procure in large quantities; and as they are not subject to the visits of the excisemen, they not only supply the prisoners but others publickly. This abuse is not to be reckoned among the number of those tolerated by the government: it took its rise under an indolent minister, and no one has since attempted to reform it.

Those debtors who claim a maintenance, are obliged to present themselves before one of the courts of justice, and swear to their poverty; after which the creditor is obliged to furnish them with the sum assigned by law.

This allowance is in consequence of a very ancient custom, and amounts to four pence per day. Very few of the debtors have recourse to this, because the oath which they are obliged to take, wounds their pride, and the supply itself is but trifling.

It is necessary, while on this subject, to remark a very singular custom. The payment of this allowance must be made every Saturday, for the following week. If the creditor is not punctual, which may often happen when he lives at the distance of a league from the King's-bench, the prisoner is enlarged, and the debt cancelled. On this occasion, all that is necessary to be done, is to prove that the stipulated sum has not been regularly paid.

An insolvent act frequently opens all the gaols in the kingdom, and then almost all the prisoners are released. I say *almost* all, because there are a few excepted from the benefit of it; those, for example, who owe five hundred pounds and upwards to any one person. With some there is a kind of infamy attached to it, which prevents them: there are others who have a great deal of money, and consequently

requently cannot become insolvent; and many are so satisfied with the advantages arising from *gaoling*, that they never wish to be released.

The names of all the debtors who choose to clear themselves by means of the act, are printed in the Gazette; and before they receive their liberty, they are obliged to swear in the presence of a magistrate, that they are unable to satisfy their creditors.

The English do not reckon imprisonment disgraceful; it is however, thought a great reproach *to be cleared by an act*. On these occasions, they are always asked if they can give any security to their creditor? when this question was put to the unfortunate king Theodore, who was actually released in this manner, he answered, *Yes, the kingdom of Corsica*.

As it is expressed in the bill, that all insolvent debtors who appear by a certain day shall be entitled to the benefits of it; on those occasions, you may see people arriving from the most distant parts of Europe, to acquit themselves of the debts which they have contracted in England. Not only the natives, but foreigners of every nation, profit by the opportunity. Tenducci, the famous Italian singer, who owed more than ten thousand pounds sterling, returned to England, in the year 1777, for this purpose. He afterwards was engaged at Drury-Lane theatre, and ran away the very next year, after having incurred several thousand pounds of fresh debts.

All the prisons in England would not be able to contain the prodigious number of debtors, both English and foreigners, who surrender themselves at such times. In consequence of this, they have adopted a singular practice, for the accommodation of those who have been some time in confinement, as well as those newly arrived. These latter are not received within the walls of the gaols, but are
allowed

allowed to be at liberty, and live wherever they please. To entitle themselves to this privilege, they are shut up for a few moments within the prison: after this, they give an *undertaking* to appear whenever they are called upon, which they would be sure to forget, were they afraid of the consequences.

As the military are wholly subordinate to the civil power, and as an officer has no right to punish a soldier for any thing but the neglect of his duty, it is not at all uncommon to find many of them confined in all the gaols of the kingdom, on account of debt, or a criminal prosecution. A foreigner, and especially a German, who has been used to behold the army, on every occasion, treated as a body altogether separate and distinct from the people, is extremely astonished at this custom. I have seen a bailiff arrest an officer on the parade, and carry him off. It is not to the colonel, but to a justice of the peace, that one complains against a soldier; it is a soldier alone who carries his complaints to the commanding officer, who when the offence is not trivial, does not think himself competent to decide upon it, but is obliged to refer it to the civil tribunal.

An old soldier, who had served on the continent during the war of seven years, where he had learned a great many military tricks, some years after the peace, while a centinel in the park, happening to take off a man's hat who was satisfying some of his natural wants, soon found that this German custom was not tolerated in England. The man immediately applied to a magistrate, swore that the soldier had stole his hat, and obtained a warrant. The thief was accordingly seized, imprisoned, tried, condemned, and would have been actually executed, if the king had not granted him a pardon.

No debtor can be arrested on a Sunday; from twelve o'clock on Saturday night, till the same hour on Sunday evening, he is in perfect freedom. During that day, he may go wherever he pleases, even among his creditors, who have been looking for him in vain during the rest of the week.

Those who have been security for any man, may, however arrest him on a Sunday: nay, even in a church, when he refuses to surrender; and neither any new process, nor fresh bail, can take him out of their hands. This privilege is more just, as not one in the whole world has greater confidence than an Englishman, or is more easily induced to answer even for a stranger, when the sum is not very great, notwithstanding he derives no advantage from his kindness. It therefore happens, that *running away* from bail, is looked upon among them as the most infamous of all actions.

It is necessary that the sheriff's officer should employ the utmost caution in seizing a debtor. A writ is only valid in certain districts, and beyond these they cannot go, without suing out another: for example the city of London, and the counties of Middlesex and Surry, have each a particular jurisdiction.

There is a certain part of Westminster, in the neighbourhood of the Park, where bailiffs dare not go, and where the debtors may remain in safety. This precinct, which includes St. James's the Green and Hyde Parks, is called the verge of the court; and is under the regulation of the board of green cloth. Before permission is granted to arrest a person resident there, he always receives twenty-four hours notice. All the houses are full of lodgers, and apartments let for more money than any where else in London.

The proverb, that an *Englishman's house is his castle*, is not without foundation; for no one can be arrested

arrested in his own house, on account of debt. However, if the bailiff, happening to find the street door open, gets to the master of it and shews his writ, he is obliged instantly to follow him. There is no kind of tricks which they do not practise, for this purpose. They dress themselves sometimes as men of condition, at other times like women, and on some occasions they wear a livery.

They are not allowed to open the street-door; but it is not at all uncommon to see them pass the bounds prescribed by law, hoping in general, that the debtors have not money enough to institute an action against them.

They are, however, sometimes deceived. It is now about twenty years ago, that general Gansel commenced a process on this account. That gentleman had not a house of his own, but hired a first floor in which he lived. As he owed a large sum of money, his creditors wished to seize him. The bailiffs, in consequence of this, having unlocked the outward door, made towards the general's apartments who wounded one of them with a pistol from the inside; but, being obliged to yield to numbers, he was dragged to prison, and there commenced an action against them.

All England was attentive to the decision on the question, whether a lodger enjoyed the same rights as the owner of a house? The twelve judges to the great satisfaction of the whole nation, decided in the affirmative. In consequence of this, the sheriff's officers were immediately conducted to gaol, and the general, who was greatly in debt, was removed to the Fleet, where he died a prisoner some years afterwards.

CHAPTER X.

The Police of London—Highwaymen and Footpads—House breakers—Anecdote—Thieves—Women of the Town—Seduction—Bagnios—Singular Excess—Unnatural Crimes held in great Abhorrence.

THE English have not a single word in their whole language, to express what we term the *police*; if one however concludes from thence, that the thing itself does not exist among them, he will be grossly deceived. Foreigners more especially, who cannot separate the idea of London from that of the highwaymen, who infest the great roads in its neighbourhood, imagine that it is the worst regulated metropolis in the world.

London is nevertheless as well governed as any city can be, which contains such an amazing number of men, who enjoy the most uninterrupted liberty. The human soul can never be more elevated than when a philosophical mind surveys this million of men crowded together whom neither the soldier nor the sceptre of despotism, but the invisible power of the laws preserves in unity, by infusing the order and harmony necessary for the regulation of such a gigantic body. If the wealth of this great city the voluptuousness of every kind with which it abounds, and the luxury of the present age are considered, ought we not rather to be astonished that this prodigious mass does not, by continual

nual friction, sometimes emit the most dangerous scintillations?

It appears to me wonderful, that the crowds of poor wretches who continually fill the streets of the metropolis, excited by the luxurious and effeminate life of the great, have not some time or another entered into a general conspiracy to plunder them.

The thefts and rogueries practised there, considering every thing, are but few in number. A wise precaution might still diminish the evil; for it is not possible that human wisdom should be able totally to destroy it; while the metropolis is so extensive, while it remains without walls, and without gates, and while the kingdom preserves its present constitution.

I shall here give some account of its present police. The poor, in every parish, are maintained out of a certain provision to which every house-keeper is obliged to contribute.

A great number of hospitals, which are the *ne plus ultra* of that kind of establishments, by their order, their arrangement, and their cleanliness, are open to the sick of all nations and religions, whom they entertain by means of annual subscriptions.

The streets are most excellently lighted every evening, towards the dusk, without having any regard to the moon, which is often obscured by clouds, although it is often ridiculously allowed for in the economical calculations in other countries. These lamps are placed for six or even seven miles along the great roads, on purpose to light the passengers. You also meet with a watch-box, at the end of every hundred yards, containing a man, provided with a gun and bayonet, who, by means of a bell, gives an alarm at the approach of any suspicious person. There are in London itself two thousand watchmen, each armed with a long pole, and carrying a rattle, with which they assemble their

their companions, at the appearance of any tumult. When they find either doors or windows open, they inform the proprietors; they also cry the hours, tell the weather, and give notice of fires.

The precautions which are taken in respect to conflagrations, those horrible scourges of the human race, are also very wise. At the first notice of a fire, you perceive a multitude of men, running from all quarters, with the engines which are entrusted to their care. For the first of these brought to the spot, they receive a recompence of five guineas, the second is entitled to three, and the third to one. The others are not paid any thing; however the hope of gaining one of the three premiums, makes them use the utmost industry and dispatch.

All the houses and furniture are insured. Every street, whether large or small, courts, alleys, &c. have their names painted at each corner. All the doors are numbered, and, besides this, generally have the names of the owners engraven on brass plates. Every house in that immense city is provided with water by means of pipes which are carried under ground. The pavement, which is of the best kind, is rendered still more excellent, by the great care that is taken of it; one is also astonished at the neatness of the streets, and the great attention to prevent the accumulation of dirt.

The hackney-coaches, of which a certain number is assigned to every quarter of the metropolis, are ready at a moment's notice, during the whole day, and dare not, on any pretence whatever, refuse to carry passengers wherever they please, either in town, or within a certain distance from it. The number is painted on two tin plates affixed to the doors; if it is ever taken off, the proprietor is fined. The hire of these carriages is regulated according to the time and the distance; and the coachman

coachman takes more than his fare, he is liable to be severely punished.

It is the same in respect to the wherries that ply on the river, which are not only numbered, but also have the names and places of abode of the watermen painted on the inside. When any complaints are made against the boatmen, an immediate decision may be expected.

The justices sit during the whole day; if any pressing business should oblige one of them to be absent, another may be found at every hundred yards. The aldermen of the city attend Guildhall in rotation, hear all disputes, and settle petty differences on the spot; this is all done *gratis*, and in open court: the judges, therefore, can neither be corrupt nor unjust. The lord mayor also sits daily at the Mansion-house.

After this description, it will be easy to decide, whether London is well governed or not. The French and their partizans will determine in the negative, because it is not the custom there, to imprison and maltreat twenty innocent people, to deter one that is guilty.

The laws are peculiarly severe against highwaymen, whose guilt, when fully proved, is punished with death. To prevent them from forming associations, they very wisely allow a culprit to escape on accusing and convicting his companions. This advantage, which those rogues often make use of, inspires them with distrust, and prevents them from uniting in associations which would be exceedingly dangerous. The magistrates also often entrap them, by means of the thief-takers, who disguise themselves, and travel in a post-chaise, along the most dangerous roads in the neighbourhood of town. These fire their pistols the moment that they are attacked, jump out of the carriage, and are often lucky enough to seize their prey. The highwaymen principally

especiallly trust for for their escape in the speed of their horses, and their knowledge of the bye-roads. This class of men are generally very polite, they assure you, *they are very sorry that poverty has driven them to that shameful recourse*, and end by demanding your purse, in the most courteous manner. They often restore to those, who in their fright have given all their money, a trifle to continue their journey. Some of them converse with the utmost phlegm, and ride off without any ceremony. Some besides the cash, take also the watch; others refuse it, well knowing that it often leads to a discovery.

Those who are too poor to procure a horse, commit robberies in the streets. The town is their place of action, as the country is that of the highwayman.

If one does not travel either very early or very late, there is no fear of being attacked even in the most suspicious places; and on such occasions, a person or two on horseback will prevent any danger. The nobility, and all people in affluent circumstances, are generally attended by servants well armed, and are never stopped, but when they have omitted this slight precaution. The highwaymen are not in the least dangerous, as they never proceed farther than a *menace*; never making use of their pistols, but in case of resistance. On this account, no person is imprudent enough to attempt defending himself, or he might easily do so in a close carriage, against a man or horseback. I never used to carry fire-arms, when it was my fortune to travel in the neighbourhood of town, at any critical hour, being contented with taking the necessary precaution, in respect to my money. This consisted in dividing it, and putting in a purse the part which I destined for the collectors; for as prudence will not allow them to stop long, they are in a hurry to depart with their spoil, without stop-

ping

ping
the pr
conv
never
think
might
those
carry
pocke
Th
classes
and c
passen
don, d
are m
the h
who,
ments
breat
these,
unles
serve
Th
to the
conde
think
any c
falling
seen
ment
eviden
he wo
happe
which
perce
circu
I p
withst

ping to examine it. Among the English, indeed, the prize is never very great, for they think it inconvenient to carry much ready money. You will never see among them a heavy purse, because they think it looks as if they boasted of their wealth, or might be suspected of some design in shewing it; those who are attached to ancient customs; never carry one at all, but keep their money loose in their pockets.

The trade of a thief is divided into different classes, each having its particular maxims, customs, and denomination. The poorer sort, who stop passengers in the streets and neighbourhood of London, during the night, are called *foot-pads*; those who are mounted on horseback, and attack travellers in the high-roads, are called *highway-men*; and those who, by slight of hand, find means to get into apartments, and commit depredations, are called *house-breakers*. The *pick-pockets* are different from all these, and are the most poor and despicable of any, unless they are very eminent in their art, and reserve themselves for great attempts alone.

These different kinds of thieves remain faithful to their particular tenets. A highwayman will never condescend to become a pick-pocket: he would think himself dishonoured, in attempting to empty any one's pockets, by a low trick. Of such a *falling off* there are hardly any examples. I have seen of those thieves, who escaped the punishment inflicted by law, on account of turning *king's evidence*, so much despise the idea of *filching*, that he would not take a handkerchief, part of which happened to be out of a gentleman's pocket, and which he might have easily snatched, without being perceived: on the contrary, he warned him of the circumstance, and desired him to conceal it.

I pass on to the other species of rogues, who notwithstanding the multitude of watchmen employed every

every where in the metropolis, steal out from their wretched apartments, and plunder houses in the night time. These break open the shutters, force the windows, or saw the iron bars, with the greatest dexterity, and little or no noise. If they are surprised by the watch, or perceive that the inhabitants are alarmed, they immediately throw their tools away, and take to their heels. They melt down silver plate, for fear of being discovered by the cypher or the arms, and are acquainted with people who purchase it in ingots, and buy from them all their booty. As these, who are termed *receivers*, encourage theft, by this kind of traffic, they are doubly punished, and find it impossible, notwithstanding their wealth, to escape from the hands of justice. They used formerly to be transported for fourteen years, to America, while thieves were only banished for seven. This has been lately changed into imprisonment; the same proportion is however still observed.

It very often happens, that women, on whom Nature seems to have been prodigal of her favours, league with these wretches. They act as spies during the day, and at night disguise themselves, and assist in profiting by the discoveries which they have made. By frequently visiting the courts of justice, I have had occasion to hear very singular transactions of this kind. I one day, at the Old-Bailey, saw a young woman, fair as Venus, present herself before the astonished judges and spectators. Her dress was in the most elegant taste, and she captivated every heart, by those graces, and that air of dignity which she displayed during her defence.

This ravished creature, happening to be very much attached to a young man, who belonged to a gang of thieves, had been so imprudent as to join them. She had assisted at one of their nocturnal expeditions, and helped to carry away the plunder.

The

The h
stood
no bo
night,
hardly
and t
accom
every
follow
imme
to the
ginati
rags,
in one
such
when
pulac
Th
unsuf
a litt
incre
mom
refuse
broug
On
house
ment
every
some
howe
gant
the h
took
room
many
after
with
after

The house where they committed the depredations stood by itself, and the owner being in the country, no body was in it. As they had not waited for the night, but simply till it was dusk, the robbery was hardly accomplished, when an alarm was given, and the thieves were pursued. Although the fair accomplice had taken the precaution to throw away every thing in her flight, yet she was obstinately followed to a house into which having run, she immediately shut the door—But how did she appear to those who pursued? Represent to your imagination an old beggar woman, covered with dirty rags, her face blackened, her hair dishevelled and, in one word, the most hideous figure in the world: such was the appearance of this handsome female, when she saved herself from the fury of the populace.

The mistress of the house was a widow, of an unsuspected reputation, she lived economically on a little income, which she however knew how to increase, by a thousand stratagems. In this critical moment she acted her part admirably; for as she refused to let any body enter until a constable was brought, she had sufficient time for preparation.

On hearing that a thief had taken refuge in her house, she pretended the greatest fear and astonishment. Her officious neighbours helped to search every corner after this frightful creature, which some of them had seen enter; they found nobody, however, but a beautiful young woman, in an elegant undress, sewing in the best apartment, whom the landlady, on entering, called her relation. She took particular care to search in every part of the room where she sat, and then retired, after making many apologies to her handsome cousin; so that after an ineffectual search, the crowd departed without the least suspicion. However, a few days after, some of the gang being seized, information was

was given against the young woman, and she was involved in the prosecution. Her charms, and her no less bewitching eloquence, made a great impression on the minds of the judges and the spectators, but the inexorable law felt no compassion, and she was condemned to four years imprisonment.

The pick-pockets, as I have already observed, form a class entirely apart. It is by trick and stratagem, and not by force, that they attain their ends; therefore they never have occasion for arms. They do not unite in bodies, each person acts for himself; and they immediately convert every thing they acquire into ready money.

There are some of them, who, by means of fashionable clothes, insinuate themselves into the first company, and their impudence is often crowned with success. A fellow of this kind, called Barrington, renowned in London, on account of his great dexterity, elegant manners, and boldness unparalleled, still carries on his trade with great reputation*. Some years since, having slipped into the state box at Drury-lane Theatre, he found means to steal from Prince Orlow a gold snuff-box, adorned with the Empress of Russia's picture, set round with brilliants. His Highness having perceived the theft, requested that the culprit might be immediately punished; but when he was informed, that it was necessary that he himself should appear in person, he stifled his resentment, and the offender was released.

Nothing is more astonishing than the fidelity, I may even say the probity of these wretches, in regard to one another: this appears in the mutual dangers that they run, the fair divisions that they make of the spoil, and, in fine is perceptible thro' their whole behaviour. This phenomenon fully

justifies

* He is at present in Newgate.

justifies the English proverb, that, "*there is honour among thieves.*"

This shameful trade has been, If I may be allowed the expression, immortalized by Gay, in his *Beggar's Opera*, which is such a favourite with the public, that it is represented in London, at least thirty times a year. In this dramatic entertainment, you may see a band of thieves, with pistols in their hands, celebrating their revels, and singing songs in honour of their profession. Of course, much may be said against the morality of such an entertainment; but it is lucrative to the theatre, on account of the witty sallies with which it abounds, its singularity, and the excellence of its music.

All the justices of the peace for the county of Middlesex, besought Garrick, in the year 1771, to stop the performance; but the English Roscius did not choose to deprive himself of a piece, which seemed to be a mine of wealth.

Criminals are never carried to the King's-bench, or the Fleet, which are destined entirely for the confinement of debtors, but to other prisons, of which Newgate is the principal. They are there put in irons, but, except this, which prudence evidently dictates, are never maltreated. Their friends may visit them, and are generally allowed to give them any relief, to alleviate their unhappy situation. There is, however, a great difference between their dungeons, and the places where debtors are enclosed, who can scarce indeed be considered as prisoners.

At an execution, the thieves, that they may see their companions die, always press as close as possible to the place of punishment: the spectators, however, have never more occasion to look to their pockets than at that moment. A remark of a highwayman, in which there is some pleasantry, is often quoted. An acquaintance of his being carried to Tyburn,

Tyburn, after having gravely surveyed the gallows, and all the preparations for his fate, exclaimed, "O, *what an excellent trade would ours be, if this d—n'd machine was out of the way!*" "Fool!" replies the other, "*this gibbet, which you curse, is the best support of our trade, for, were it not for it, every pick-pocket would turn highwayman.*"

Cheats ought to be mentioned entirely by themselves. They never steal, but employ all the stratagems that can be devised, to *trick* people out of their property, and convert the wealth of others to their own use. Half of their business is to be well acquainted with the laws, for they always take care to carry their projects just short of that point where the magistrate would interfere. They associate together, hire noble houses, furnish them with magnificent furniture, and keep the most shewy carriages. The valet de chambre and the footmen are all in the secret, and share the earnings of their employer. Sometimes the master puts on a livery, to quiet a clamorous creditor, who, duped with the brilliant appearance, has left his goods, without ever having seen the master of the mansion.

Concerning this subject, I could relate a thousand anecdotes, of a very uncommon kind, which I heard during my stay in London; but as these agree so little with the manners and customs of all the other countries in Europe, they would be accounted so many fables.

I am now arrived at a subject unfortunately inexhaustible, I mean the *women of the town*. It is well known how handsome the English ladies are, and I am sorry to add, that the greatest part of this class of women abuse, in the most shameful manner, the charms with which Nature has so prodigally endowed them. London is said to contain fifty thousand prostitutes, without reckoning kept-mistresses. The most wretched of these live with

matrons,

matrons, who lodge, board, and clothe them. The dress worn by the very lowest of them is silk, according to the custom which luxury has generally introduced into England. Sometimes they escape from their prison, with their little wardrobes under their arms, and trade on their *own bottoms*, when, if they are unfortunate, or happen not to be economical, they are soon dragged to gaol by their creditors.

The uncertainty of receiving payment makes the house-keepers charge them double the common price for their lodgings. They hire by the week a first floor, and pay for it more than the owner gives for the whole premises, taxes included. Without these, thousands of houses would be empty, in the western parts of the town. In the parish of Mary-le-bone only, which is the largest and best peopled in the capital, thirty thousand ladies of pleasure reside, of whom seventeen hundred are reckoned to be house-keepers. These live very well, and without ever being disturbed by the magistrates. They are indeed so much their own mistresses, that if a justice of the peace attempted to trouble them in their apartments, they might turn him out of doors; for as they pay the same taxes as the other parishoners, they are consequently entitled to the same privileges.

Their apartments are elegantly, and sometimes magnificently furnished; they keep several servants, and some have their own carriages. Many of them have annuities paid them by their seducers, and other settlements into which they have surprised their lovers in the moment of intoxication. The testimony of these women, even of the lowest of them, is always received as evidence in the courts of justice. All this generally gives them a certain dignity of conduct, which can scarcely be reconciled with their profession.

The

The higher classes of these females are uncommonly honest; you may entrust them with a purse crammed with gold, without running any risk whatever. They can never be prevailed upon to grant favours to the lover of one of their companions, even if they are sure that the circumstance will be kept a profound secret. One of my friends made a proposal of this kind, and was refused; he redoubled his presents his caresses, but in vain: "I am, sir," says she, "an unhappy female, obliged to live by this dishonourable profession; and Heaven is my witness, that I am in want of money; but I will never consent to have any connection with the acquaintance of my friend. If you were an Englishman, I might not be so difficult, but as you are a foreigner, I cannot. What opinion would you have of us, if I were to gratify your wishes?" Not satisfied with the excuse, he ridiculed her delicacy, and tempted her with more money; but, notwithstanding her poverty, she persisted in her refusal, and all this from national pride.

During the elections for members of parliament, it is not unusual to see these ladies refuse to barter their favours for large sums of money, and reserve their charms for the purchase of votes, in favour of certain patriots, whom they esteem.

Such virtues greatly lessen the infamy of their profession. I have seen many people of rank walk with them in public, and allow them to take hold of their arms, in the most familiar manner. I have even beheld more than one minister plenipotentiary conversing publicly at Vauxhall, with females of this description. Although their rank requires a decorum, which would be unnecessary among the English nobility; yet these gentlemen easily accede to the customs of a country, when they are in favour of liberty.

One

One
celebrat
count o
sacrific
an unc
wit, jo
vivacity
cured t
who pr
sures o
deman
her ch
whom
Among
to the
her to
Fisher
be thu
the m
his pr
slices
fast.

Th
capita
most
nation
obje
young
cated
polis
home
wond
to ab
pleas
shoul
come
W
ing

One of these ladies, called Kitty Fisher, was very celebrated, about twenty-five years since, on account of the elegance and delicacy with which she sacrificed to Venus. She was indebted to Nature for an uncommon portion of beauty, judgment, and wit, joined to a most agreeable and captivating vivacity. The union of so many perfections procured the esteem and fascinated the desires of those who prefer Cyprian delights to all the other pleasures of life. This lady knew her own merit; she demanded a hundred guineas a night, for the use of her charms, and she was never without votaries, to whom the offering did not seem too exorbitant. Among these was the late Duke of York, brother to the king; who one morning left fifty pounds on her toilet. This present so much offended Miss Fisher, that she declared that her doors should ever be shut against him in future; and to shew, by the most convincing proofs, how much she despised his present, she clapt the bank-note between two slices of bread and butter, and eat it for her breakfast.

The idea of the pleasures to be enjoyed in the capital inspires the girls in the country with the most longing desire to participate in them. Imagination inflames their little heads, and presents every object under an exaggerated appearance. The young people of both sexes, who have been educated at a distance from town, imagine the metropolis to resemble that paradise promised to the Mahomerans, by their great prophet. Is it to be then wondered at, that they form so many little projects to abandon their homes, and reside in the centre of pleasure? Or that a maiden, without experience, should be easily deceived, when the proposition comes from a lover?

When an amorous couple has no hopes of getting their parents' consent to their union, they foolishly

foolishly think that they are obliged to run away, and they accordingly make for London. This fatal elopement raises the indignation of the young woman's relations, who are deaf to her prayers, and the young man becoming more pressing every day, she yields to his desires, in the hope of being more happy. The ungrateful lover, after being satiated with her charms, abandons her: thus left without any help, alone, unknown, she remains in the midst of an immense city, where trick and intrigue every day produce the most atrocious and singular scenes.

Some severe censor may here say, that in this deplorable situation she might take the high road, and beg her way to her father's house, or having received some education, she might get into service. These two resources are impossible in England. The amiable professor Moritz has already proved, by his own example, that journeys on foot are entirely impracticable in that island. But if they were, could a young and beautiful creature venture to travel by herself? In the second place, who would employ a person whose character could not be ascertained, and who has no one to speak in her behalf? And if she were willing, and fortunate enough to overcome so many disadvantages, would, she be permitted? Her hostels, her creditors, the true or sham officers of justice; the most infernal schemes, and most scandalous practices, are employed against the poor wretch, till, yielding to necessity, she is constrained to consent to whatever is required of her.

One need not be astonished, after this, to hear that there are so many unfortunate women, who often possess all the virtues, and all the good qualities which we admire and cherish in their sex; youth, beauty, mildness, education, principle; and even that delicate coyness, which is the most powerful attraction to love. The ladies of pleasure in London actually give us an idea of the celebrated

Grecian

Grecian courtesans, who charmed the heroes of Athens, and whom the sage Socrates himself often honoured with his visits.

Let it be recollected, however, that I now speak only of a few, for it is very uncommon, not to say impossible, to find such precious qualities among those vile prostitutes, whose kind of life stifles in their breasts every seed of virtue, if any indeed ever existed therein. At all seasons of the year, they sally out towards the dusk, arrayed in the most gaudy colours, and fill the principal streets. They accost the passengers, and offer to accompany them: they even surround them in crowds, stop and overwhelm them with caresses and entreaties. The better kind, however, content themselves with walking about till they themselves are addressed. Many married women, who live in the distant parts of the town, prostitute themselves in Westminster, where they are unknown. I have beheld with a surprise, mingled with terror, girls from eight to nine years old make a proffer of their charms; and such is the corruption of the human heart, that even they have their lovers. Towards midnight, when the young women have disappeared, and the streets become deserted, then the old wretches, of fifty or sixty years of age, descend from their garrets, and attack the intoxicated passengers, who are often prevailed upon to satisfy their passions in the open street, with these female monsters.

Besides the immense number of women, who live in ready furnished apartments, there are many noted houses, situated in the neighbourhood of St. James's where a great number are kept for people of fashion. A little street called *King's Place* is inhabited by nuns of this order alone, who live under the direction of several rich abbesses. You may see them superbly clothed at public places; and even those of the most expensive kind. Each of these

K

convents

convents has a carriage and servants in livery; for the ladies never deign to walk any where, but in the Park. They pay for their lodgings and their board, and are entirely on the footing of *pensioners*, being governed by the rules of the house.

The admission into these temples is so exorbitant, that the mob are entirely excluded: there are indeed, only a few rich people who can aspire to the favours of such venal divinities. The celebrated Fox used to frequent these places often before he became a minister; and even afterwards, drunk, as it were, with the pleasures which he had enjoyed, he went from thence to move, astonish and direct the House of Commons, by means, of his manly and convincing eloquence. It is very singular, that this man, while he sacrificed to Venus, and participated so often in her orgies, was always regulated by the maxims of an unimpeachable probity, and true patriotism; the moment, however, that he devoted himself entirely to the study of politics, he stifled the spirit of libertinism, and with it these two virtues.

There is in London a species of houses called *BAGNIOS*, the sole intention of which is to procure pleasure. These are magnificent buildings, and the furniture contained in them is not unworthy of the palace of a prince. They there procure every thing that can enrapture the senses. They do not indeed, keep women, but they are instantly brought in chairs; and only those who are celebrated for their fashion, their elegance, and their charms, have the honour of being admitted. The English preserve their national phlegm in the midst of their very pleasures. It is impossible to form an idea of the gravity with which every thing is conducted even in these houses. Noise and riot are banished

banished; the domestics speak in a whisper; and old men, and debauched youths, put every scheme in practice to restore the proper tone to their nerves, which have been weakened by too much enjoyment.

This kind of entertainment is very expensive, and yet sometimes the *bagnios* are full all night long. For the most part, they are situated within a few paces of the theatres, or are surrounded by taverns. The profusion of wealth wasted in them, occasioned Beaumarchais, who was not unacquainted with the luxuries of Paris, to affirm, "That more money is exhausted during one night in the taverns and bagnios of London, than would maintain all the SEVEN UNITED PROVINCES for six months."

A young gentleman, a native of Hampshire, whose father never would give him permission to visit London, had scarce buried the old gentleman, and become master of his own person, and a fortune of forty thousand pounds sterling, when he set out for town. His passion for debauchery was so very great, that, instead of alighting at an inn, he went directly to a bagnio, and there demanded a lodging. They had never been asked for this before; but his inexperience, and his wealth, made them agree to every thing; and they immediately began to project plans, which he was eager to execute. Continually surrounded by sharpers, and women of the town; intoxicated with music, love, and wine, days and nights imperceptibly glided on, and followed each other without being perceived. The scarcest wines were drank by them, in the utmost profusion; they even made baths for their feet with champaign. For eleven days this luxurious young maniac led this kind of life; when he thought proper, at length, to make his arrival known to one of his friends. This gentleman's surprize was extreme: he however, immediately

repaired to the inconsiderate youth, and painted the dangers and the disagreeable consequences of this kind of life in such lively colours, that he consented to depart immediately. It was, however, first necessary that the bill should be settled: the host demanded for these eleven days of wild debauchery, no less than twelve hundred guineas: The new MENTOR however resisted the charge with indignation: the young man was arrested, bail was given; and, to punish the perfidious address with which he had attempted to ruin an inexperienced lad, a court of justice reduced the demand to a mere trifle.

Were this abuse, the natural consequence of luxury and superabundance, attempted to be reformed, such a reformation, in a country like England, would be attended with the most pernicious consequences to trade and commerce. If they were to establish a tribunal of chastity in London, as was formerly done at Vienna, that great city would soon be depopulated; the melancholy of the English would become intolerable; the fine arts would be frightened away; one half of the inhabitants would be deprived of subsistence, and that superb metropolis converted into a sad and frightful desert. If any proofs are wanting, enter the shops of the citizens, and ask them who are their best customers, and who pay them the most regularly? They will immediately answer that they are the unfortunate women, who deny themselves almost the necessaries of life to purchase fine clothes, and spend in one moment the whole gains of a week. Without them, the theatres would be empty: they not only repair to all public places in crowds, but draw after them thousands of young men, who frequent these places, merely to see and converse with them. Every one who knows London must be of my way of thinking.

A young

A young unmarried Englishman, with a large fortune, spends but a small share of it on his common expences; the greatest part is destined to his pleasures, that is to say, to the ladies. A tavern-keeper, in Drury-lane, prints every year an account of the *women of the town*, entitled, *Harris's List of Covent-Garden Ladies*. In it the most exact description is given of their names, their lodgings, their faces, their manners, their talents, and even their tricks. It must of course happen, that there will sometimes be a little degree of partiality in these details: however, notwithstanding this, eight thousand copies are sold annually.

The English women are so handsome, and the desire to please them, and to obtain their favours, is so ardent and so general, that it is not in the least surprizing, that those islands should hold a *certain unnatural crime* in the utmost abhorrence. They speak in no part of the world with so much horror of this infamous passion, as in England. The punishment by law is imprisonment, and the pillory.— With this accusation, it is, however, better to suffer death at once; for, on such an occasion, the fury of the populace is unbounded, and even the better sort of people have no compassion for the culprit. It is very uncommon to see a person convicted, and punished for this crime: not on account of the paucity of the numbers charged with perpetrating it, but because they never yield to such a brutal appetite but with the utmost precaution.

A criminal prosecution was commenced, on a charge of this kind, against Foote, the celebrated comedian, about a year before his death. The intrepid actor soon after appeared upon the stage, in one of his gayest characters; but the noise from the pit, and the *epithet* made use of, and repeated from box to box, entirely disconcerted him. At length he obtained liberty to speak. He then assured

the audience that he was innocent, and besought them not to condemn him unheard: he promised to demonstrate before a court of justice the falsity and the malice of the accusation; and added that, until he had fully established his innocence, he would not aspire to the continuance of that favour with which the public always had honoured him. The spectators were appeased. He acted his part and received the usual plaudits: he also gained his cause.

The custom so common in other parts of Europe, of men's *saluting* each other, is looked upon with the utmost indignation in England. A foreigner who would attempt such a thing in the streets of London, would in all probability be insulted by the populace. Instead of embracing, they *shake hands*. This ceremony repeated more or less often, expresses the different degrees of good will, friendship and esteem. People sometimes act this *pantomime* in such a *forcible* manner, that they make each others hands and arms ache.

If *kissing* is not allowed among the men, this prohibition is amply recompenced by the right of publicly embracing the ladies. The husbands themselves are not vexed at this agreeable custom. Neither jealousy nor shame can prevent it; practice has thus rendered a fashion entirely indifferent, which in Italy, would be regarded as a presumption which the offender could only expiate with his blood.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XI.

The manner of living in England—Coffee houses—Lloyd's—Assurance Offices—Domestic Customs—The Contrast between French and English Dinners—Cookery—Liquor—Dress—Singlar Request to the King—Servants—Sunday—Good-nature of the People—Boxing—Marshall Saxe's Dispute with a Scavenger—The King of Bath.

THE English live in a very remarkable manner. They rise late, and spend most of the morning, either in walking about town or sitting in the coffee-houses. There they not only read the newspapers, but transact business. Associations, insurances, bets, the trade in foreign bills; all these things are not only talked of, but executed in these public places. They there form connections, conclude bargains, talk of the intrigues and cabals of the court, criticise works of genius and art, and enter into patriotic resolutions concerning the good of the state.

Each profession has its own particular coffee-house; such as lawyers, the military men, the learned and men of wit.

There are several dozens of these around the Royal Exchange, where more business is transacted than in the Exchange itself. That of Lloyd's in a particular manner deserves to be noticed; I do not think that there is another equal to it in all the world. Those merchants who speculate in insurances, and who in 1778 amounted to six hundred,

assemble there. They subscribe ten guineas a piece per annum, and by means of that sum, carry on an immense foreign correspondence with all the countries in Europe.

This society accordingly receives the earliest and most authentic intelligence, respecting the politics or the commerce of all the nations inhabiting the four quarters of the globe. They often inform government of circumstances that they would not know till long, after from their ministers and their agents; and which, perhaps, they would never otherwise hear of. The spirit of order and exactness, introduced into their interesting regulations, is so perfect, that the most extraordinary news receives a certain degree of authenticity by coming from that place.

As these gentlemen, in common with the rest of the nation, are famous for their *public spirit*, they are not barely contented with informing their particular friends, but transcribe their intelligence into a book, for the inspection of the nation at large. They also publish the arrival of all vessels, whether English or foreign, that come into any of the ports of England. There is not one of these, whose good or bad properties they are unacquainted with. They also know their age, the character of the captain, &c. &c. Being composed almost entirely of rich merchants, there is no danger of losing the sum assured, but in case of a *general bankruptcy*; and such is their known probity, and reputation, that they are often, in doubtful cases, appointed umpires by foreign states.

An English-coffee house has no resemblance to a French or German one. You neither see billiards nor backgammon tables; you do not even hear the least noise; every body speaks in a low tone, for fear of disturbing the company. They frequent them principally to read the Papers, a task that is absolutely necessary in that country.

The

The dinners of the English, like all their domestic customs, have something peculiar to themselves. By supposing every thing to be entirely opposite to what it is in Paris, one may form a just idea of these houses in London, where the old fashions are still kept up. The number of people who live in the Anglo-Gallic style is very small.

Soup, which is the first dish in France, never appears on any table in London. The French eat a great deal of bread, and very little meat; the English much meat, and little bread. Joints, in France, are either roasted or boiled to rags; they eat them almost raw in England. Ragouts, sauces, and *made dishes*, are the delicacies of the French; the English are for what is simple and natural; they even push this taste too far. The tables of the former are often too small for the dishes; the entertainments of the latter consist of two or three large pieces of meat, or of prodigious pies, in which some hundreds of birds are entombed.

The desert, in France, is composed of fruits and confectionary; in England, of large cheeses. Among one nation, they eat more than they drink; among the other, they drink more than they eat, and regard their liquors as the chief article in a repast.

The English are in a hurry during their meals, that they may sooner indulge this passion. The ladies then leave them to enjoy themselves with greater freedom. Politics immediately commence, and *healths* continually go round; each guest proposes a toast in his turn, the master of the house having first given his. They then fill their glasses, and, naming either a minister or a beauty, empty them in a moment.

Napkins, which have been disused for twenty years, are now beginning to be introduced. Those who are attached to the old customs, ridicule the

use of them. This precaution, they say, is only necessary for children; grown persons have no occasion for them, as they can cover themselves with the table cloth, which is of an extraordinary length. They change the knife and fork with every plate. They do not use these instruments indifferently in either hand, as in all the other nations in Europe; the fork is always in the left, and the knife in the right hand. It is by this method, which is infinitely more commodious than ours, that you may immediately know an Englishman before he has spoken a single word.

The discredit into which English cookery has fallen among foreigners, proceeds entirely from the prejudices entertained against their manner of dressing viſuals. But who, in the whole world, would not prefer flesh full of succulent and nourishing juices, to those roasted meats which are insipid to the taste, if not eaten with an unwholesome sauce? I have known ladies brought up very delicately, and used to all the elegancies of foreign tables, who, on their first arrival in London, have been disgusted with the viſuals; but they soon changed their minds, and found them very agreeable afterwards. It is the simplicity in the dressing, that alone generates such prejudices in the breasts of strangers.

Their drinks also are remarkable, on account of the singular mixtures of which they are composed. Sillabub for example, is a composition of red wine, milk and sugar. The common people enjoy themselves during the winter, with warm * beer mixed with bitter essences, and with ale in which gin, sugar, and eggs have been boiled together. It is their attachment to strong liquors, that makes them so very fond of port-wine, which is sold at a high price. Burgundy and champaign are exceedingly dear, on account of the duties: notwithstanding

this,

this, the consumption of these wines is very great in London, where they like every thing that is *powerful and beady*. Although cyder is allowed to be equally agreeable, yet it is drunk only in the distant counties.

They are peculiarly attached to porter : on this account, there are no less than eight thousand ale-houses in the metropolis and its neighbourhood. In these all ranks are mixed and confounded together : it is not uncommon to meet with even persons of quality there.—It is well known that Swift and Sterne frequented them, to study the human heart.

The impost on coffee is so great, that it pays a duty of more than seven pence a pound. This does not, indeed, lessen the consumption ; the exorbitant price, however, occasions it to be drunk very weak. This custom is so prevalent, that even the richest people will not use it when strong ; the most contemptible tradesman in all Germany drinks better coffee than they do. In respect to tea, the English are, on the other hand, uncommonly nice : and it is calculated, that they consume more of this commodity than all the rest of Europe. Thousands of people live on on this beverage, and bread and butter, which is said to correct its bad qualities ; but they take care that the one is good, and the other strong. Our manner of drinking it, would not in the least agree with them ; for that they may the better enjoy the flavour of the herb, they colour it with only two or three drops of milk.

They generally eat wheaten bread. The prodigious swarm of Germans settled in London, have prevailed on some bakers to make *rye bread* ; the sale of it is, however, very confined, for my countrymen themselves soon prefer the other. I have offered it to their beggars, and even they have rejected it.

It is surprising, that mankind generally have an invincible disgust to all the viands which they have not been used to during their infancy. This singular aversion, which we perceive in all nations, can never be overcome but by the most pressing want. *Sour crout*, a composition long unknown among the English, has been very beneficial to their sailors during distant voyages; and yet, it was necessary to take infinite pains to reconcile them to this antiscorbutic nourishment.

It was not until Captain Cook's second expedition, that, exhorted and encouraged by the two Forsters, the seamen used themselves to it. During that tedious and dangerous navigation in the unknown seas, one man alone perished, and it was to this composition that the fortunate circumstance, of which, till then, there had been no example, was generally attributed. Government have therefore taken the proper precautions, that no ship of war, destined for a long voyage, should be unprovided with this excellent preventive.

It is absolutely necessary that travellers should conform themselves to the manners of every climate, in respect to diet. Disease, and even death itself, are the sad consequences of this neglect; and I could cite a number of examples to this purpose. The East Indies become graves to thousands of Europeans, merely because they choose to live there in the same manner as in their native country. Without this caprice, the projected journey through Arabia would have succeeded, and NIEBUHR had not returned alone.

A foggy air, and nourishing food, make it necessary to drink strong liquors in England. Those who use water often lose their health, and sometimes their lives. The same effects would attend the use of the English regimen in Italy, where the burning heats require sherbets, cooling liquors, and other customs, and, in one word, a different manner of living.

living
the cl
of im
Th
all the
drefs,
years
court,
always
about
in the
and th
torn,
meets
somet
howe
both
kind
They
great
and t
It
walk
being
Th
dling
daily
good
opule
paid
'Cha
custo
ever
often
It
have
prop
pert

living. It is very common to hear strangers blame the climate, instead of the unhappy consequences of impolitic negligence.

The English are unfortunately led away, beyond all the other countries in Europe, by the luxuries of dress, which every day seems to increase. Twenty years ago, gold and silver lace was not worn but at court, and the theatres; persons elegantly attired always rode in carriages. The people crowded about a gentleman who walked in full dress, either in the streets or the Park; they never used swords, and the beaux wore their hats. Except the last custom, none of the others prevail. One now often meets with laced cloaths; even the common people sometimes appear in embroidered vests. In general, however, the English still wear plain broad cloth, both in summer and winter, but it is of the finest kind; a common tradesman will use no other. They do not cover themselves with *pelisses*, but great coats, which guard against the cold in winter, and the rain in spring and autumn.

It is in this simple dress that the ministers of state walk about the streets and public places, without being followed by a single domestic.

The English in general, even those of the middling class, wear very excellent linen, and change it daily. The fineness of the shirt and stockings, a good hat and the best of shoes, distinguish a man in opulent circumstances; no attention whatever is paid to the coat. The richest citizens frequent the 'Change in cloathes very old, and much worn. The custom of wearing rich buttons prevails more than ever within these few years; so that a simple frock often costs more than a laced one.

It is almost in spite of themselves that the English have adopted the custom of dressing their hair; the people employed in that business are the most expert of any in Europe.

Some

Some years since, the wig-makers of London presented a very singular petition to the king, beseeching the sovereign to cut off his hair, and wear a wig: "Your majesty's example," said they, "will be followed by every one; and our trade, which is now ruined, will soon acquire its wonted consequence and celebrity." The king laughed at this pleasant request, but did not think proper to grant it.

I have already more than once had occasion to mention some characteristic traits of the English nation. The great difference betwixt them and the rest of Europe, proceeds entirely from the liberty which they enjoy, and which gives occasion to a thousand extraordinary and singular customs.

It is not according to our ideas that we ought to calculate the space that separates the different classes of men in that monarchico-republican government. This observation extends even to servants. The first man in the kingdom is cautious of striking his domestics; for they not only may defend themselves against him, but also commence an action in a court of justice: in such a case, a pecuniary recompence, and many disagreeable circumstances, are sure to follow. They observe with a great deal of reason, that as poverty and dependance contribute very little to the happiness of this life, it would be extremely cruel to aggravate the lot of those who are obliged to live in servitude, by a conduct unauthorised by the laws. If a servant commits a fault not punishable by the magistrate, his master can only dismiss him.

Those will be much deceived, who may from thence imagine, that an English footman will consequently be impertinent. On the contrary, I am convinced, that no part of Europe abounds with better domestics. The noble condescension with which they are treated, the fear of not receiving a character,

character, and the largeness of their wages, all tend to keep them in good order, and inspire them at once with zeal and activity.

One is also astonished at the politeness and promptitude with which he is attended at taverns and coffee-houses: a circumstance which but ill corresponds with the pride of the nation: it must however, be recollected, that the waiters always expect a gratification, and that, in some of the principal houses, this amounts to a great sum in the course of the year.

The scandalous practice of giving *vails*, so much in vogue twenty years ago, is now almost entirely banished: it exists no where but among the lower orders of the people. Formerly a visitor was obliged to distribute a great deal of money among the servants, when he dined with a man of quality: so that it was much cheaper to go to a tavern, than to accept of such an invitation. It is to Lord Chesterfield that the English are indebted for the abolition of this custom: his representations had such weight with the nobility, that they unanimously agreed to discountenance it.

The appearance of the female domestics will perhaps, astonish a foreigner more than any thing in London. They are in general handsome and well clothed: their dress has the appearance of some taste, and their conversation such as if they had kept the best company. A stranger is apt to be embarrassed at the first, and can scarce imagine that they are not gentlewomen. They are usually clad in gowns well adjusted to their shapes, and hats adorned with ribbands. There are some who even wear silk and satin, when they are dressed. All their work consists in keeping the house neat, and dusting the furniture. To this employment they attend for a few hours in the morning; and after that,

that, all the rest of the day is entirely at their own disposal.

As to a *lady's maid*, the eye of the most skilful *connoisseur* can scarcely distinguish her from the mistress. The appearance of a waiting-woman is that of an opulent and a fashionable person; she usually accompanies her lady in public, expects particular attention to be paid to her, and, after some years of service, generally receives a small annuity which makes her comfortable for life.

When out of place, servants of all denominations apply to a register-office; a singular institution, known only in that country, by means of which they are immediately provided with employment.

Sunday is very strictly observed in England; and as all kinds of work, even music, are prohibited, that day is therefore usually destined to the pleasures of the country. All the citizens who have country-houses, repair to them on Saturday afternoon, to make preparations for their friends on the following day. The prodigious number of ale-houses and taverns, situated near the capital, is then full of persons of both sexes; and, contrary to the general usage, an *ordinary* is kept for their reception. All the great roads around London are also crowded with carriages, horses, and foot passengers; and I may fairly assert, that three-fourths of the inhabitants of the capital keep the *Sabbath* in this manner.

It is very singular, that these weekly revels never occasion any disturbances, or excesses of any kind.

It seems to me, that no better proof need be alledged of the good nature of the English; than their deportment on all public occasions. One is astonished to observe compassion, benevolence, generosity, and, in one word, all the social virtues, carried to so high a degree of perfection, among
the

the lowest of the people. If a stranger loses his way, and happens to ask for any particular street or house, the first person whom he meets will point out his road, and even accompany him, without the hope of any recompence: no one ever experienced a refusal.

When any embarrassment is occasioned by the jostling of coaches in a narrow street, the people immediately fly to relieve them, and restore order; they are perfectly satisfied with thanks. In Paris, it is not unusual to see blood spilt on such occasions; the magistrates, therefore, distribute soldiers in all parts of the city, to preserve tranquility. Such a precaution is never made use of in London; yet the greatest regularity prevails at Ranelagh, the Pantheon, and other public places, notwithstanding the multitude of carriages which are assembled there.

The king of England, in 1784, gave an amiable instance of the humanity so general in that kingdom. Happening to stroll in one of the agreeable walks in the neighbourhood of Richmond, without any other company than that of some of his sons, he met with a poor villager, who had been selling provisions in the town. His cart was struck in a ditch, and having no help, he was attempting in vain to get it out. Without deliberating a moment, the monarch, aided by his children, went to his assistance, and immediately relieved it with his own hands. The peasant, unacquainted with the rank of those who had come so generously and opportunely to his succour, in the joy of his heart, proposed to carry them to the nearest ale-house, and treat them with a pot of beer. His offer produced a few pieces of gold in return, and their departure gave him time to recover from his astonishment. The present which occasioned this charming
action

action to be known, at the same time betrayed its author.

On any public commotion, when the people run into the streets, and assemble in crowds, the greatest care is taken lest any accident should happen to the women and children, whom they either make room for, or carry in their arms, that they may be better seen.

A lady of fashion, the wife of a minister from one of the German courts, when coming out of the play-house, happened to get into a crowd, where the pressure was extreme, and the danger of her situation the more alarming, as she expected in a few days to become a mother. At the moment when she was about to faint, a person who supported her with his arm, cried out, "Gentlemen make room, I beseech you, for a *lady with child*, "who is suddenly taken ill." She herself has often assured me that a *thunder-bolt* could not have more quickly dispersed the mob, than this exclamation. Every one immediately gave way, and she luckily got to her carriage without any further delay.

In the year 1780, when the dregs of the people acted the GORDONIAD, and made conflagrations their pastime, these wretches never carried their violence so far as to attack a woman; even those of the catholic religion were in perfect safety. When the populace, who were enraged against the archbishop of York, were about to set fire to his house, Mrs. Markham, his wife, appeared at the window, and addressed them in the following terms: "Gentlemen, a lady has this very moment been taken in labour here; and as it is impossible to remove her and the infant, I hope that you have too much humanity to occasion their death." This ingenious petition had the proper effect, and the crowd instantly dispersed.

When

When a quarrel happens in the streets, the passers immediately interfere. Persons of the highest rank do not hesitate for a single moment to become mediators. The day after my arrival in London, I had an opportunity of being a witness to this practice in an affair where I myself was interested. A young jew, a native of Germany, having attempted to cheat me in the most bare-faced manner in the world, I felt myself so much piqued at the fellow's impudence, that I could not contain my resentment. The customs of the English being entirely unknown to me, I acted exactly in the same manner as I should have done in my native country, on finding my honour wounded. I accordingly seized the culprit by the collar, who, fearful of my resentment, cried out with all his might, and soon gathered a crowd around us. As I was not ignorant of the language, I immediately recounted the circumstance which gave occasion to such violence. Some of the people, however, informed me, in the most polite terms, that, according to the laws of *that* country, no offence whatsoever could warrant my behaviour. The jew, who was conscious of his guilt, did not choose to prosecute me, but escaped as fast as he could, and gave me time to profit by the just observation of these worthy people, and to return them my thanks.

In similar disputes, when the parties agree to terminate their differences by a *boxing-match*, the spectators, far from opposing them, encourage the idea. This custom, which proceeds from certain false principles of courage and equality, is, not, however, so much in fashion as formerly. Even persons of quality were not heretofore ashamed of engaging in such quarrels. They have of late, however, left the glory of them entirely to the populace

lace, who, being no longer animated by their example, begin now to have less relish for them.

The two combatants strip to the waist, and attack each other with their *fists*; a *ring* is then immediately formed by the populace. His *second* assists the person who falls, wipes the sweat from his body, and re-animates his courage. When they fight on a stage, each is also attended by a *bottle holder*, who washes his friend's face, and usually squeezes a lemon into his mouth. The fight often lasts half an hour, and sometimes longer, till one of the parties declares that he is vanquished:— this they call *giving in*. The victor, who is often more hurt than the person whom he has conquered, is then conducted home in triumph by the spectators.

It is not in the power of prejudice itself to stir in the hearts of that people, the esteem which a courageous conduct always inspires. I myself happened to be present at a *fight* betwixt an Englishman and a Frenchman. The first was looked upon as a master in the science of boxing; the other was ignorant of the first principles of the art; he therefore entirely confided in his strength, which, indeed, so effectually befriended him, that he struck his adversary to the ground with the first blow, and rendered him unable to continue the combat. It seemed as if this *blow* had destroyed the national hatred, so forcibly impressed in the breasts of the spectators; every one was eager to overwhelm the victorious Frenchman with praises and caresses; they afterwards joined to treat him at an ale-house.

The *art of boxing* has certain rules, from which no one ever departs: whoever attempts to infringe them, becomes immediately exposed to the fury of the populace. For example, when one party falls, his adversary must not strike him; and the combat is immediately to cease, on either of them acknowledging himself to have been beaten.

On the event of these battles, which are sometimes attended with fatal consequences, considerable interests frequently depend; it is not uncommon, however, to hear the combatants who are generally incited by hatred alone, cry out, on these occasions, "That they fight for love!"

The celebrated Marshal Saxe was once challenged in this manner, by a scavenger who was employed in sweeping the streets. He, relying on his amazing strength, accepted the proposal; the scavenger, therefore, began to strip according to custom; but he had scarce taken off his shirt, when the Marshal seizing him by the arms, to the great astonishment of the spectators, threw him with the same ease as if he had been a truss of straw, into his own cart; where he struggled along time with his hands and feet, and was very near being stifled in the mud.

The English used formerly to fight duels in the same manner as other nations; but the puritans disapproved this barbarous custom. These enthusiasts, who would allow no other rule of conduct than that prescribed by the bible, having found nothing therein to authorize this species of combat, took a decided aversion to it. At last, Cromwell, by enacting severe laws against this practice, abolished it entirely. This was, perhaps, the first time that fanaticism ever produced such happy consequences.

Within these last fifty years, however, duels have begun to be again in vogue, in the same proportion that boxing has declined. But as every thing in that country is different from what it is elsewhere, so happens that this custom, which in other kingdoms is confined to a certain rank, has no bounds among them. You may there see priests, merchants, and clerks terminated their differences with a case of studs.

Some

Some years since, two Negroes in livery fought each other in this manner. As the stage continually satirises such extravagancies as these, this ridiculous practice is now discountenanced.

The English are still very fond of cold baths. There are a prodigious number of these in London, where one may bathe daily at the rate of a guinea per annum. This practice is much recommended by the best English physicians. The antient Romans were also very much addicted to it. It was by these means that Antonius Musa restored the health of the emperor Augustus. The senate, on account of this cure, remunerated him with a magnificent present, and erected a statue to his memory, which was placed with that of Esculapius. Septimus Severus made use of the cold bath daily; and as he resided a long time in Britain, it is probable that he introduced the practice into that island. The Saxons borrowed the custom from the antient Britons.

England possesses many mineral springs, a great number of which still retain the names of the saints after whom they were formerly called. The fountains were the first christain preachers baptised their converts, inspired a certain religious veneration, and were esteemed *holy*. The monks, taking advantage of such prejudices, attributed in their legends certain miraculous virtues to these places, after they had first discovered their natural effects.

Of all the *waters* in England, those of Bath are the most remarkable; they were known even by the Romans, who consecrated them to Minerva. The Britons call this place EAER PALLADDUR, or the City of Pallas.

Bath is a handsome town, and the public buildings which it contains are really magnificent. It is not only resorted to by the sick, but even by those in health

health, whom the variety of pleasures to be seen there, attracts from every part of the three kingdoms. The *season* when it is most frequented is the beginning of the winter.

To regulate the diversions, and preserve order and regularity amongst such a prodigious number of people, who are at the same time rich and free, it has been thought proper to choose a person who is stiled **KING OF BATH**; to whom the most entire obedience is paid, in regard to every thing that concerns the general good. This convention is made and agreed to by the first people in the kingdom, who regularly frequent the place, and maintain their sovereign in his prerogatives. This situation is equally honourable and lucrative, for it produces a revenue of sixteen hundred pounds sterling annually. It is for life, unless great and forcible reasons oblige the subjects to dethrone their monarch.

This eminent post is usually given to some gentleman, who joins to much experience a considerable portion of wit, gaiety, and knowledge of the world. All these qualities, together with an extraordinary talent for inventing new pleasures, and arranging elegant entertainments, were united in an Englishman of the name of Nash, who for many years ruled Bath with an unlimited sway. He died in 1761, and was greatly lamented by his whole kingdom.

The throne is at present filled by a gentleman who was formerly a captain in the army.

CHAPTER XII.

Character of the English Ladies—Of the Nobility—Whimsical anecdotes—Hon. Mr. Montague—Lotteries—Insurance office—Betts—Sir Watkin W. Wynne—Lord Baltimore—May-day—Voyage to New Zealand—Otabeite—Charles I.—Anecdote of a Spaniard—National Hatred—Aversion to Anatomical Operations—Mrs. Phillips—Ballads.

OF all the remarkable objects which England offers to the eye of a foreigner, no one is more worthy of his admiration, than the astonishing beauty of the women.

It produces such a surprising effect, that every stranger must acknowledge the superiority of the English ladies over all others. The most exact proportions, an elegant figure, a lovely neck, a skin uncommonly fine, and features at once regular and charming, distinguish them in an eminent degree. Their private virtues also render them capable of enjoying all the felicity of the marriage state.

The proneness of the whole nation to melancholy, renders the women grave and serious; their minds are less occupied about pleasures, than in solicitude for the happiness of their husbands, and the management of their domestic concerns. Even women of quality suckle their children; they think that the name and duties of a *mother* have nothing in them which they ought to blush at, and that no station

on

on earth is comparable to the pleasures of maternal tenderness, and the agreeable reflections which result from it.

Notwithstanding vice is often pushed to the extreme in the capital, it is very uncommon to see a married woman become profligate, and give way to infamous pleasures. To this there is always an insurmountable bar in her love for her family, the care of her household, and her own natural gravity. I am of opinion, that there is not a city in the whole world where the honour of a husband is in less danger than in London.

It is to this serious and melancholy disposition that we ought to attribute the attachment of the English catholics to the cloister, and which has induced so many of them to retire to France, and still more to Flanders. They have even established a species of convents in England, for those who do not like to leave their native country. A certain number of ladies live there in common, perform divine service together, and conform to all the institutions of that order to which their *house* belongs. Like other nuns, they take the vows, and their dress is always plain and modest.

I have already mentioned the prodigious attachment of the English to politics. This passion is actually among them an inducement to marriage. A husband who can talk of nothing but public affairs, is always sure to find in his wife a person with whom he may converse concerning those topics which interest him most. He has no need to go abroad, to satisfy his appetite for this darling subject.

The English are not ungrateful to Nature for her prodigality towards them. The children are never bound up in swaddling-clothes, but covered with a thin dress, which gives a perfect freedom to all their motions. The great advantages arising from inoculation, become every day more perceptible.

L

The

The schools for the education of young people of both sexes, are almost always in the country. In walking through the charming villages which surround the metropolis, one is delighted to see three or four houses together, dedicated solely to this purpose. These support a prodigious number of language-masters, dancing-masters, music-masters, &c. &c.

The ladies trusting perhaps too much to their natural charms, often neglect the means of setting them off to advantage. But a very few, even of the women of the town, make use of *rouge*. Many women of fashion, when dressed in the most elegant manner, do not use hair-powder; *neatness*, however, which seems actually to be a *rage* amongst them, is never neglected,

The most elegant part of an Englishwoman's apparel is her hat, which is usually adorned with ribbands and feathers. No female, of whatever rank, dares appear in the streets of London on foot, without one of these; the very beggars wear them. The art with which they place them, is but imperfectly imitated by foreigners, who know not how to derive from them all their magical advantages. The charming effect which they produce, made Linguet observe, that if Homer had been acquainted with this enchanting dress, he would not only have given a cestus to Venus, but also a hat.

The fair sex in that country have a number of customs peculiar to themselves, and among others, that of riding on horseback; in this situation, they may be seen galloping by hundreds along Hyde-Park. On these occasions, they are always dressed like Amazons; a practice introduced by queen Anne, the consort of Richard II. and which has continued to the present time. The ladies also think it indecent to shew themselves at the window. It is only an extraordinary circumstance that will make a woman

of

of character open it, to satisfy her curiosity. The women of the town, however, are entirely above such a prejudice.

The education among the English, as far as it regards health, is excellent: I cannot, however, say so much in respect to morals. The abuses which prevail in the great schools are well known; I shall therefore be silent concerning them. After a long contention concerning the advantages and disadvantages of a public or private education, it seems at last to have been decided in favour of the former. The young duke of Bedford, who is the richest peer in the kingdom, was for several years at Westminster, where he was brought up as other young men. His table and his bed were entirely the same as theirs. Two guineas a week were allowed him for pocket money; and out of his income, which amounts to sixty thousand pounds per annum, five hundred only were expended in his education.

All the exercises which tend to bring the muscles into action, and to make the body healthy and robust, are the daily recreations of these public schools, which, notwithstanding their numberless disadvantages do not, however, make youth effeminate.

A great number of children of good extraction are destined from the earliest age to commerce, and educated accordingly. This practice, so wise in itself, and which was the source from which the Genoese nobility derived their opulence, and by which the illustrious house of Medicis were raised to a throne, where they became the benefactors of mankind, was not introduced into England until about the middle of the seventeenth century.

The English nobility during the civil war, being almost entirely attached to the king, were banished from all employments by the House of Commons, whose power then preponderated; they therefore

had no resource but in trade. Those who possessed abilities amassed immense riches, contributed by their example to remove the ancient prejudices which still subsisted in their country against the employment of a merchant. Soon after this, some of the first people in the kingdom became the most zealous partizans of commerce, and embarked their fortunes in it, by which means they at once gave activity and vigour to trade. This it is affirmed, was the crigin of that splendour and opulence which England soon after acquired. In our own time, we have seen the son of Sir Robert Walpole, formerly prime minister of England, a private banker, and the brother of lord Oxford, a citizen of London.

People of rank not only become merchants, but some of them have even condescended to learn trades. It is only however from whim, that a person of quality ever takes such a strange resolution. I shall mention, for example, the honourable Wortley Montague, brother-in-law to lord Bute, who, when a child, ran away from his father's house to become a chimney-sweeper. The rags with which he was covered, the coarse fare, and the blows which he received daily, seemed preferable, in his eyes, to all the advantages appertaining to his birth. For nine months he followed this profession, and remained in the capital unknown: at length, however, he was discovered and brought home, where every thing was practised to cure him of his singular attachments but in vain. He soon afterwards eluded the vigilance of his relations, embarked as a cabin boy in a vessel that sailed for Lisbon, and then travelled over Spain as an assistant to a mule-reer. The life of this man, who died some years since in the East, is one of the most melancholy and remarkable examples of the waywardness of human nature.

These

These fantastical actions are very frequent in England; and they there pass under the denomination of *whims*.

In the year 1776; a person died in London, who by means of trade amassed the sum of sixty thousand pounds sterling. By his will, he appointed one of his relations his sole heir; with this particular condition, however, that he should repair every day to the Royal Exchange, and remain there from two till three o'clock. Neither the weather, nor his own private affairs, nor any thing but bad health, of which he was to produce a certificate, could excuse him from this task. If he omitted his attendance for a single day, he was to lose the fortune by an express clause in the will, and a certain charitable foundation was to become entitled to the whole estate.

The testator, by this means, intended to pay a compliment to commerce, by which he had procured his riches; but this *whim* made a slave of his heir. It was on Sunday alone that he could leave London, because the Exchange was then shut. I have seen this man, and been witness to his extreme discontent.

An English nobleman in the decline of life, having passed a very restless night in one of his country-houses, formed the resolution of marrying; and, that he might avoid trouble, resolved to espouse the first woman that he should see the next morning. Full of this idea, he rose at break of day and rang his bell. His *valet-de-chambre* appeared immediately, and having received orders to call up one of the women, he ran for the house-keeper. Scarce had she entered his apartment, when his lordship said, "Go and dress yourself immediately to accompany me to church, for I intend to make you my bride this day." The house-keeper smiled, and imagining that her master only meant to joke with her,

departed without saying a word. Half an hour after his lordship rang again, and enquired of the servant, whether she was not yet dressed? On being informed that she was employed about the domestic affairs, he ordered any other female to be sent him, and accordingly one of his scullions was produced. She immediately accepted of the proposal, and in an hour afterwards became his wife. A son, who afterwards filled one of the first offices in the state, and who is still alive, was the *fruit* of this singular whim.

I was once acquainted with an Englishman, who was extremely amiable in his character, and remarkably polite in his manners, but who had a most fantastical passion, which he assured me was deeply imprinted in his very soul. His greatest pleasure in life was to comb the hair of a beautiful woman. He kept a charming mistress solely for this purpose. He cared but little whether she loved him, or was faithful to his bed; all that he wanted was to please his senses by means of her long and beautiful locks. He has often assured me that this employment produced the most voluptuous sensations.

The execution of a criminal, interests in the most lively manner the celebrated George Selwyn, who is generally loved and admired on account of the goodness of his heart, and the readiness of his wit. Such a spectacle has inexpressible attractions to him, and affects his senses in a manner equally powerful and inexplicable.

One of his friends, after reproaching him with his *whim*, betted a large sum that he would be present at an execution which he named. Mr. Selwyn, accordingly was led away by an invincible impulse; which not being able to conquer, he actually paid the wager, and repaired to Tyburn. When Damiens, the regicide was broke on the wheel at Paris, the wit did not fail to be present: he even gave

gave a sum of money to the executioner to permit him to stand on the scaffold, to contemplate this horrid scene in a more familiar manner.

A love for what is singular and extraordinary, also occasions that spirit of gambling which is so general in England, more especially during the drawing of the lottery. At that time a prodigious number of insurance-offices are opened in all parts of the capital, and policies are made upon particular numbers. In the evening a large bowl of punch, which is constantly replenished, is placed on a table, around which many unfortunate wretches, becoming intoxicated with the fumes of the liquor, and their passion for gambling, ruin themselves and their families.

Such is the passion of the English for play, that every dispute is generally decided by a bett. I knew an Englishman who laid five hundred pounds, that during a whole year he should sleep every night in a different house in London. The three first months, however, had scarce elapsed, when he repented of his engagement, and chose rather to pay the money than be exposed to the inconvenience of such frequent removals.

In the year 1778, just before the war commenced between England and France, two wealthy Englishmen made the following agreement:—One of them, who did not doubt that hostilities would soon commence, but who imagined the period at a greater distance than was expected, gave a hundred guineas to the other, on condition that he should pay him one guinea a day until war was proclaimed. It so happened however, that, from reasons of state, the war was begun and finished without ever being proclaimed. The loser has since offered to pay his antagonist one thousand pounds; which the other however refused, and he now actually receives three hundred

and sixty-five guineas per annum, in consequence of this circumstance.

There are number of people in England, who take a secret satisfaction in breaking the laws of their country. Some, notwithstanding they are not in want, seem to be impelled by an irresistible desire towards their neighbour's property, in which covetousness has nothing to do. I myself knew a very beautiful woman, who put any thing in her pocket which she happened to see; it was, however, always returned next morning.

Another lady, both young and charming, had the same propensity, without possessing the same honesty. If she stopped any where to make a purchase, she was always sure to *steal* more than she bought. A shopman having conceived violent suspicions against the fair plunderer, resolved to be on the watch; and having caught her one day stealing a piece of Flanders lace, he left it to her choice either to be carried before a magistrate or a clergyman: she accepted of the latter, and the young man at the same time became master of a handsome wife, and twelve thousand pounds sterling.

Another offender of the same kind was not so lucky. His name was Ayre: he was a man about sixty-six years old, and was possessed of thirty thousand pounds sterling in the public funds, which he had procured in business. Being incited solely by avarice, he stole every thing that he could lay his hands upon. One day, while attempting to make off with two quires of paper from the stamp-office, he was caught in the fact, tried for the offence, and, as it was fully proved, was sentenced to be transported to America for seven years. This miserable wretch, however, at length, became the just victim of his own sordid avarice; for his friends having privately agreed with the captain of the ship for a cabin and other necessaries during his passage, he

he was scarce at sea when he repented of the bargain. He therefore rather chose to sleep on straw with the other criminals, that he might save his money, than on a good bed which he was obliged to pay for. Being soon after seized with a fever, this old man, overwhelmed with age and infirmities, died before his arrival in America.

The conduct of Sir Watkins William Wynne well merits the denomination of a *whim*. This baronet, who is the richest commoner in Wales, when he came of age, gave an entertainment to the nobility, gentry, and farmers of that district, which lasted for three days, and by its magnificence was not unworthy of a sovereign. The guests, who amounted to eighteen thousand of both sexes, eat, drank, and danced in the open air.

The annals of England are full of whimsical occurrences. In the county of Essex, there is a village called Dunmow, into which the lord of the manor, who died in the thirteenth century, introduced a singular custom, and at his death left a fund for perpetuating it. By this, any husband becomes entitled to a fitch of bacon, who can solemnly swear that he has not, for a whole year, disputed with his wife, and never once, during that period, repented of his marriage.

The records of that place notice only three men, who, during the space of more than three centuries, have been able to take such an oath.

But none of the English of the present age have become so remarkable by their singularities, as the famous Lord Baltimore, whose whole life was one uninterrupted series of innumerable oddities.

His follies, however, never hurt any one: on the contrary, they were generally attended with uncommon marks of goodness and benevolence. His fortune was immense, for it amounted to nearly forty thousand a year, the greatest part of which

was transmitted to him from the province of Maryland alone. He had laid it down as a principle, to live entirely according to his own fancy; in consequence of this, he never solicited those employments and dignities, to which, both on account of his fortune and his abilities, he had a right to aspire. He never went to court. An attachment to the *fair-sex* was his strongest passion: a circumstance which was greatly augmented by his travels in the East. On his return to England, he built a superb house, in the most pleasant part of London, after the mode of a celebrated HARAM in Constantinople. The edifice being finished, he formed it into a seraglio, which he furnished with handsome women, to whom, except the permission of going out, he refused nothing. They were, however, regulated by certain rules, and to these he exacted the strictest obedience. His lordship lived in this manner, in the capital of a christian country, exactly as if he had been mussulman. If he disliked any of his sultanas, they were loaded with presents, and allowed to depart: some of them actually received portions, and were enabled to marry in consequence of his liberality.

Although this kind of life did very little harm, and the English, as we have already said, are extremely indulgent towards *whims* and *caprices* of every kind, yet the inhabitants of London could not bear those Turkish customs. Songs and satires were daily composed on this English bashaw, and the most trifling anecdotes of his domestic life were wrought up into novels and romances. The courtiers, who never could pardon the contempt with which he treated their manner of living, also endeavoured to ridicule his conduct.

In a short time, one of the young women whom he entertained, was prevailed upon to accuse him of having committed a rape upon her. A criminal process

process was instituted in consequence of this accusation; but his lordship vindicated his innocence, and triumphed over the malice of his enemies. This affair, however, made a lively impression on his mind; he dismissed his mistresses, sold his house, which is at present occupied by the duke of Bolton, gave away the magnificent furniture, and in a short time left his native country. He died soon after at Naples, in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

The immense riches possessed by the English, enable them to indulge in the most uncommon caprices. A wealthy individual, some years since, built a house not far from Hyde-park, merely to ridicule the gothic style. All that was disagreeable and fantastical in that *taste* was here *caricatured*.

A young prodigal, having formed the project of laughing the free-masons into contempt, who used to walk in procession through the capital, on St. John's day, assembled about eighty chimney-sweepers, whom he decorated with the ensigns, and badges usually worn by that fraternity, and obliged them to march in a solemn manner through the principal streets.

One may easily conceive the great number of people who were attracted by this pleasantry; and from that time, that society have never publicly celebrated the feast of their patron saint.

I myself assisted at a satirical procession, but of a kind entirely different from the former. The people of England, in the year 1770, were extremely discontented with the administration which at that time governed the affairs of the kingdom, because they imagined that they intended to overturn the constitution. In consequence of this, about a hundred persons, clothed in deep mourning, assembled together, to accompany a hearse covered with black,
and,

and followed by attendants in the same manner as at a funeral. In the inside of this the GREAT CHARTER was placed, surrounded with all the emblems of LIBERTY, the *obsequies* of which they celebrated in the most solemn manner. The procession, followed by an innumerable crowd, passed the palace of St. James's; and this farce, which terminated without any bad consequences, conveyed a very proper lesson; at least, the event shewed that it was an useful and a necessary one.

This taste for the EXTRAORDINARY some years since gave rise to a very uncommon project. It never was heard of in Germany, and is but little known even in England.

A Scotchman of the name of Herries, who lived in one of the Hebrides, or Western isles, had been disappointed in love. This circumstance had such an effect on his mind, that he conceived a disgust for a civilized and social life. He therefore resolved to seek for other men, and other countries: in consequence of this he sold his estate, and with the money equipped two vessels, on board of which he embarked, with about sixty of his tenants. His sole intention in this expedition, was to sail for New Zealand, a description of which he had read in Captain Cook's Voyage, and then, to gain the affections of the inhabitants, marry a native of the country, introduce agriculture, and become sovereign of the whole island!

A gentleman of fortune conceived the strange idea of going to reside in Otaheite; five of his friends offered to accompany him, with their wives and families; and actually applied to the younger Forster, who had been there, for his opinion of the enterprize.

The history of England affords, even to remote periods, a number of most the fantastical anecdotes. During the civil war between Charles I. and his parliament,

parliament, at the time when the royalists began to despair of overcoming their enemies, the equestrian statue of the monarch was put up to auction. A cutler, who had a mind to *speculate* on this circumstance, bought it for a trifling sum of money. Being asked what he intended to do with it, he replied, that it was his intention to melt it into *bundles for knives*. Accordingly, he furnished his shop with a prodigious number of knives and forks, with *bronze* mounting. In a short time his warehouse was full of customers; persons of both parties ran to purchase knives, the handles of which were made from a statue of a king of England. To the royalists, it afforded a melancholy but precious remembrance of their dear master; and as to their antagonists, this extraordinary circumstance was not a little flattering to their republican pride. The mechanic, in the mean time, profited by the enthusiasm of his countrymen, and doubled the price of his commodity, notwithstanding the rapidity of its sale; so that in two or three years, he realized a considerable fortune.

All this time, however, the public had been duped. The statue had not been melted, as the cutler had asserted, but only buried in the ground, and was actually, on the restoration of Charles II. dug up and restored to that prince, who ordered it to be placed on a new base at Charing-Cross, where it remains to this day.

The emblem on the pedestal is well appropriated to the subject: it consists of two Genii, who, with sorrow imprinted on their countenances, sustain a crown of thorns.

At that unfortunate period, when the English forces, under the command of general Braddock, were beat in America by the French army; when Minorca was taken by the latter power; and Admiral Byng, by the intrigues of the ministry of the former,

former, had experienced a violent, and as some still assert, an unmerrited end; the nation became furious. In this unfavourable disposition, the populace having observed a foreigner dressed entirely in the French style, near the statue of Charles I. immediately surrounded him. As he had just arrived in London, and was entirely ignorant of the English language, it was impossible for them to tell what countryman he was.

The mob, in the mean time, held a consultation, and at last it was resolved to place him on his majesty's horse. A ladder was accordingly procured in an instant; the unhappy stranger was obliged to get on behind the monarch, and, after the most insulting language, was about to be pelted with dirt.

Luckily, however, at the moment when they commenced the assault, a gentleman happened to be passing that way, who having asked the reason of this strange behaviour, and learned from the stranger himself that he was a Spaniard, immediately informed the people of this circumstance.

No sooner did they know their mistake, than they testified the utmost repentance for their precipitation, helped the rider from his uneasy seat, and delivered him into the hands of his preserver.

The English populace call every foreigner a Frenchman, whether Swiss, German, or Italian. They in general have the greatest hatred that can be imagined to the whole French nation. Of late years, however, this prejudice seems to be entirely banished from the better sort, who now think the language of that polished people a necessary part of their children's education. It was otherwise formerly. The late Lord Suffolk, one of the promoters of the American war, actually employed a master to instruct him in the French grammar, after he became a secretary of state for the foreign department.

Then

The aversion of the English to anatomical dissections, is another of the prejudices which characterize that nation. The surgeons have great difficulty in procuring dead bodies; they are obliged to pay large sums for them, and are forced to carry them to their houses with the utmost secrecy. If the people hear of it, they assemble in crowds around the house, and break the windows.

What greatly augments the general aversion to so useful a science, is, that the sextons are oftentimes induced, by the certainty of a reward, to dig up corpses from the church-yard.

I am astonished that government does not take advantage of this national prejudice, and deliver to the surgeons the bodies of all foot-pads and highway robbers. Murderers, after execution, are always allowed to be dissected.

The English, far from being selfish in regard to the happiness and independence resulting from their liberty, on the contrary, wish to see all the kingdoms of the earth partake of the same blessing; this is another of the traits that characterize them.

At the time when PAOLI and his brave countrymen were obliged to yield to the power of France, the whole nation affirmed, that it was their duty to aid these islanders in the recovery of their liberty. The government, who were not willing at that time to gratify the wishes of the people, were nevertheless obliged to appease their murmurs, by granting a pension of a thousand pounds a year to the Corsican chief, which he enjoys at this very moment.

Every thing in London is made known by means of hand-bills or advertisements in the newspapers. One person informs you that his MAD-HOUSE is at your service; a second keeps a boarding-house for idiots; and a good-natured man-midwife pays the utmost attention to ladies in *certain situations*, and promises to use the most scrupulous secrecy.

Physicians

Physicians offer to cure you of all manner of disorders, for a *mere trifle*, and as for the money to pay them, you need never be at a loss; thousands daily making tenders of their services to procure you, *at a moment's warning*, any sum that you may stand in need of.

A lady of the name of PHILIPS is very solicitous in advertising her goods which are undoubtedly very singular in their kind. These consist of ware which are to be met with in a very few great cities in Europe, The voluptuaries of Italy are but imperfectly acquainted with them; and it is only in Paris, and in London, that they are manufactured and used.

I beg leave to mention the BALLADS, among the singularities to be met with in this nation. These, it is true, are also common in France, but not sold publicly as in London.

It is usually females who are employed in this avocation. They wander about the most populous streets of the capital, stop now and then and draw a crowd around them, to whom they sing their songs, which they sometimes accompany with music. In these, witty expressions and humorous sallies are often contained; and one is sometimes sorry to see such talents as the writers must undoubtedly possess, employed in celebrating the trifling occurrences of the day. The subject is generally some political event, which has novelty and interest to recommend it. These ballads, being printed on coarse paper, are sometimes sold for a farthing, and sometimes for a halfpenny a piece; the quickness of the sale, however, amply repays the printer, they are vended by thousands, if they happen to be popular. The populace purchase these with the utmost eagerness, and consider them as so many delicious morsels.

In other countries, the vulgar imitate the higher ranks; there, on the contrary, the great are only solicitous to distinguish themselves from the mob. A rich tradesman thinks that he is entitled to the privilege of being *original*, and to live after his own manner.

These originals, whose manners are as savage as they are uncommon, are generally called *John Bulls*, and one sometimes meets with a *John Bull* among people of fashion.

John Bull is a favourite subject for the satire of dramatic writers. The people are never more happy that when they see their own follies personified in this character; they are then sure to receive every sarcasm with the loudest applause.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XIII.

The Theatres—Italian Opera—Jubilee in honour of Shakespeare—Kelly the Poet—The Contrast betwixt the English and French Theatres—Foote—Garrick. George Alexander Stevens—Mrs. Cornelys—Pantiboon—Masquerades—Debating Societies.

THE two principal theatres in London, open during the winter, are those of Drury-lane, and Covent-garden; in the Haymarket play-house, which is under the direction of Mr. Colman, they act only during the summer months.

The Italian Opera generally commences in the month of December, and shuts in June: the representations are twice, and sometimes three times a week. As the English in general have no great attachment to this exotic entertainment, and are, for the most part, entirely ignorant of the language, this theatre is treated with the utmost contempt by the more sensible part of the people. The nobility alone support it; and they merely because—*it is the fashion*.

There is not any place of entertainment in Europe where the audience yawn so much as there; its decorations, machinery, and wardrobe, are altogether unworthy of the nation. There is nothing tolerable but its music. The great sums given by the managers to the *castratos*, who are better paid in England than any where, prevent them from laying out any money on the necessary decorations. The latter

latter consequently enrich themselves, and the former have been constantly involved in difficulties.

It is very singular, that the manners, customs, and pleasures of other countries, can never become popular in England. This singularity extends to masquerades, and is visible in regard to operas; for although the opera-house is a noble building, and has cost immense sums. It has never yet been able to produce one work whose merit rose above mediocrity.

Every thing that can characterise the English nation, is to be met in their national theatres alone: there all the efforts of art, the elegance of composition, and the flights of genius, are united. Drury-lane and Covent-garden are rivals to each other, and it is difficult to decide, which of them possesses that superiority for which they both contend.

These two play-houses, for forty days before Easter, perform oratorios on certain days, and sometimes double the price of admission. These are generally HANDEL's compositions. The singers are all English; and it has been observed by some judicious connoisseurs, that they only want Italian names, and a few journeys to the continent, to procure uncommon reputation.

The greatest part of the foreign musicians who visit London remain there; for as that great city is actually a PERU to them, they do not choose to deprive themselves of the lucrative monopoly which they there enjoy, in regard to their profession.

The English theatre is said to have attained its greatest degree of perfection during the last years of GARRICK's life; and without doubt, this was its most brilliant period. The principal works of the immortal Shakespeare, and other celebrated dramatic poets, were then represented with a justice, a dignity, and a magnificence, before unknown.

It is true, that even then there was but one GARRICK, but he was seconded by the efforts of other actors, who, without equalling him, were yet worthy of being his associates in immortalising that celebrated epoch. Among these were Barry, Woodward, Weston, &c. The retreat of the English Roscius, in 1776, was followed by the decline of the stage; the other three died in the same year. Mrs. Abington, the *Athalia* of England, wished also to retire, and could not be prevailed upon to remain without the most earnest entreaties.

Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Henderson supplied, but in an indifferent manner, the public loss; they were the only two who distinguished themselves among the crowd of actors, who were at that time candidates for the favour of the public. They made their first appearance at Drury-lane, and were loaded with applause. The audience, however, began in a short time to see them with a greater degree of coolness, and became consequently more sparing of their praises.

Among the number of *peculiarities* belonging to the English playhouses, may be reckoned the after pieces, called ENTERTAINMENTS. These for the most part, consist of a happy mixture of dialogue, song, and dance; the decorations are amazing, and the machinery is carried to the most astonishing perfection.

The people are uncommonly attached to this kind of diversion. All the great events that occur to the nation are dramatised and represented on the stage; for example, the coronation of the present King, the Prince of Wales receiving the order of the garter; the grand review at Portsmouth, in 1774; the camp at Coxheath; and the siege on Gibraltar. These representations often last for an hour and a half, and are usually given after one of Shakespeare's plays.

The

The English do not dislike entertainments, however long, provided they have variety to recommend them.

I have seen the Peak of Derbyshire, its grottoes, caverns, and adjoining mountains, and, in fine, every thing that is marvellous in that spot, represented with an art that seemed to equal magic.

But the most remarkable of all these, is SHAKESPEARE'S JUBILEE : that in honour of Voltaire, at the French Theatre in Paris, in the year 1777, was a paltry imitation of the Jubilee of the English Poet.

When this is acted, the scenes are painted to represent the market-place at Stratford. At a certain signal, the stage is filled with a mob of country people, whom they actually take out of the street on purpose ; and then begins a procession, the like of which has never been seen on any theatre.

A troop of dancers march first with a solemn step ; after them come nymphs, who strew flowers around. The principal characters in each comedy then make their appearance, preceded by a flag, on which the name of the play is inscribed ; a triumphal car, in which THALIA is drawn by *grotesque* figures closes the first part.

This is succeeded by the Muses, Venus, and the Graces ; Cupids, Nymphs, Fawns, and Dryads, who carry the statue of Shakespeare, and keep time to the sound of instruments of music.

Tragedy closes the procession, attended by heralds and standard-bearers, who walk before her : then not only the principal characters in each piece, but also the most striking incidents make their appearance.

In Macbeth the forcerers and their cauldron ; in Coriolanus the tent of that general adorned with the *fasces* ; and in Romeo and Juliet the tomb of the Capulets

Capulets, forcibly impress the mind with the recollection of the principal incidents in every play.

When the persons of the drama arrive on the stage, they represent, in *dumb-show*, the principal passages of the tragedy.

King Lear exhibits the madness with which he is supposed to be afflicted; and Richard III. that fury with which he is transported in the midst of the battle.

Macbeth appears with a bloody poniard in his hand, and his lady, as described by the poet, pursued by the avenging furies, and wandering about the palace with a lighted torch. Juliet starts from her lethargy, and lifts her head from the bier. The lictors and the eagles precede Julius Cæsar; a number of Roman ladies prostrate themselves before Coriolanus, and implore his protection. The procession closes with Melpomene, who is drawn in a chariot, and holds an uplifted dagger in her hand.

The last scene represents a superb temple, the altar of which is adorned with the principal subjects mentioned by the poet, depicted in transparent paintings.

This was a real *apothecosis*, for it was not a literary fanaticism, but a just admiration of every thing that is truly great and sublime, which placed the statue of this immortal genius in the temple of immortality.

The actors constantly pay the same, if not a greater, attention to the galleries than the boxes. Before the curtain is drawn, there is a great deal of noise and afterwards the players are sometimes pelted with orange-peel: it is very rare, however, that any disturbance is attended with dangerous consequences. In 1772, Hugh Kelly, who, from writing in favour of his country, at length defended the minister, having presented a comedy called, *A Word*

to the *Wife*; the audience were so exasperated, that they would not allow it to be acted. Garrick made his appearance, but for once even he begged in vain: the play therefore was withdrawn, and they instantly became quiet.

The *action* of the English stage is entirely different from that of the French. When one makes a comparison between the good actors in London and Paris, the dissimilarity of their tones, their gestures, and their expressions, appear to be wonderful.

The marriage of FIGARO, which was represented in the month of December 1784, almost at the same time in Paris and London, afforded a wonderful instance of this observation. However, an intimate knowledge of both theatres, and even of Nature herself, will easily discover to us that there is more than *one way* to arrive at perfection.

The English make use of a great deal of action and vivacity on the stage, and are not very strict in adapting these to the propriety of their characters. Very few of them, indeed, ever acquire a dignified manner.

In original plays, taken from their own history, and which consequently exhibit the manners and the customs of the nation, this fault is not so perceptible as in translations, such as *Zara*, *Iphigenia*, the *Horatii*, &c. in which, it must be confessed, that they do not excel. The women's parts are however, better sustained. The actresses support the honour of theatres, by means of a nobleness and a dignity which charm the beholder.

Mrs. Abington is the greatest ornament of their stage, and unites all parties in her praise. She attempts comedy alone, but with such a happy combination of nature and art, that I may affirm, without fear, that so many talents were never united in any other female performer in Europe. She is not more than fifty years of age, and yet is able to represent

present, with the same ease and propriety, either a country girl or a woman of fashion,

The Hay-market theatre was established by the celebrated Foote, the late duke of Cumberland having procured a patent from George II. for that purpose. This actor was styled the *English Aristophanes*. Besides a satirical humour which was natural to him, and discovered itself the moment that he opened his lips, he had the advantage of successfully imitating the Greek poets, by bringing his cotemporaries on the stage, and making them the *butt* of his sarcasms, and the public ridicule.

He may be said to have invented a middle kind of dramatic entertainment betwixt comedy and farce. It must be confessed, that his productions have the merit of being so many interesting pictures of the manners of the age. He usually chose some temporary subject, spun it into three acts, and made but little alteration even in the names of those who had the misfortune to fall under his lash. He knew how to imitate with great exactness the gait and conversation of any one, and never forgot to place his heroe in the most foolish and ridiculous point of view. When he played, the house, during the whole representation, was affected with a continual and convulsive laughter.

His satirical vein made him feared by all who approached him, as he spared no one, and his witty sarcastic expressions were never forgotten. — But no person dreaded him so much as Garrick, who was more affected by any pleasantry against himself, than by the highest eulogiums in his favour. He made use of every stratagem to procure Foote's friendship, but in vain, for his natural temper could not be confined by any restraint.

Lord Sandwich, who had been greatly offended at some of his jokes, happening to meet him one day,

day, asked, "whether he was most likely to be first ~~executed~~ or hanged?" "That entirely depends, my lord," replied the wit, "whether I embrace your lordship's mistress, or your principles."

The profession of an actor is not thought dishonourable in England; on the contrary, he is regarded and esteemed on account of his talents. Both Garrick and Foote not only lived in the most familiar manner with the first nobility in the kingdom, but actually went to court, and were well received at St. James's. The funeral of the former afforded the most convincing proof, how much they respect persons who among us are treated with so much contempt. A great number of peers not only accompanied the corpse of this great man but actually supported the pall. Perhaps it may be here thought that I allude to some inconsiderate young men of fashion, who, forgetting the respect due to their rank, were actuated merely by their enthusiasm for Garrick. It was far otherwise. Men illustrious on account of their merit, and among others lord Camden, who some years before had been chancellor of England, paid this mark of respect to their immortal countryman.

The friends of Garrick, after his retreat from the stage, wished him to become a member of parliament. It depended wholly on himself, to aspire to and receive this honourable mark of distinction; but his advanced age made him rather anxious to enjoy the great fortune which he had acquired, amidst the calm and tranquility of a country life.

When shall we see our German actors honoured in this manner? If great talents could procure such a distinction with us, they would long since have met with their reward. It is not necessary to be inspired with the zeal of patriotism, to rank SCHRODER among the first actors now in Europe. To compare him to Le Kain, would be doing the
M greatest

greatest injustice: it is only necessary to see these two perform, to be of my way of thinking. The plays of Shakespear, on which Garrick founded his reputation, lose nothing of their force or beauty in the mouth of Schroder; but his own countrymen, so liberal in the praise of every thing foreign, have not yet been so just, either sufficiently to appreciate his merits, or those master pieces of the English theatres.

A person of the name Stevens, who died in 1783, was the inventor of an entertainment equally singular and original, which he called *Lectures on Heads*. This consisted in comical and satirical observations, upon all ranks and classes in the nation.

The author displayed a thorough knowledge of the world, much wit, and a great deal of gaiety in his representations. To animate his narration, and to give force to his ideas, he procured a prodigious number of portraits, the physiognomy and dress of which were expressive of those characters, and occupations, which he ridiculed.

He knew how to imitate their voice, their looks, and their manner, with the most happy adroitness. Women of the town, barristers, physicians, clergymen, merchants, officers, men of learning, artists, ladies of fashion, and billingsgates; in one word, all the professions, copied by Stevens, were caricatured before the public with the utmost humour and gaiety.

It was very seldom that this performer was trivial; every thing that he said was full of that *practical philosophy*, which is as instructive as necessary. He usually ended his lecture with a satire against himself, in which he never spared his own foibles.

It has been often attempted, but always without success, to establish a French theatre in London. The last effort was in 1752. A great number of French

French actors were then engaged at a prodigious expence; and a play-house was fitted up in the most costly manner for their reception. When the first representation was announced, an uncommon number of people of all ranks and descriptions assembled on the occasion.

The comedians expected a disagreeable reception; but the noise and the catcalls of a tumultuous populace soon made them loose all their courage. It was in vain that they attempted to begin: the clamours and the uninterrupted hisses of the pit and galleries, joined to showers of orange-peel, always prevented them. Not one of the actors had the boldness to appear a second time on the stage; and no other resource was left them, but to escape through a private door.

Some days afterwards, they risked another attempt. A great number of young men of fashion, armed with swords, placed themselves in the boxes, while their servants, and several people hired for the purpose, occupied the centre of the pit, to second them in case of need. When the curtain drew up, this served as a signal for the attack. The stage was instantly covered with oranges: the actors took to their heels, and the champions from the boxes and pit joined each other sword in hand. In a short time the affray became general: the gerandoles and the crystal branches were broken in a thousand pieces. The ladies fainted away, and the gentlemen who had the rashness to draw upon the people, had their swords broken in pieces, and were obliged to retire, beaten and covered with blood. The tumult was concluded with the entire destruction of the play-house, after several persons had been killed, and many wounded, who might truly be said to have suffered martyrdom on account of their attachment to the French theatre.

After this unfortunate attempt, who would have thought that such an absurd project would have been again revived? However, in 1778, a society of persons of quality, headed by the duchess dowager of Bedford, projected the renewal of the same scheme, and, having formed the plan, persisted in its execution.

French comedians were already sent for from Paris, an agreement was entered into with them, the most advantageous promises held out, and money advanced for the journey: in one word, all the arrangements were completed. In a few days, however, the news-papers were full of satires, both in verse and prose, against this undertaking: songs were sung in every street, ridiculing the French stage; and, what was undoubtedly more disadvantageous than any thing else, Palmer an actor belonging to Drury-Lane, addressed the public in a prologue, in which he besought them not to patronise a foreign, at the expence of the national theatres. His petition was received with uncommon applause, and the dispositions of the people made evident by the general enthusiasm of the audience.

This Anglo-gallic society accordingly concluded, that it would be very dangerous to persist in their scheme; and, in all human probability, it will never be revived.

The concerts in London are allowed to be very grand, and the English in general prefer them to the music of the opera-house; but as the price of a ticket is a half-a-guinea, none but the higher ranks can receive any gratification from them.

Ranelagh is incomparably superior to any thing of the same kind in Europe. Its immense saloon and magnificent illuminations, the continual motion of the people of fashion who assemble there in crowds, and the delicious music, make this a most
fascinating

fascinating and enchanting spectacle. It must however be confessed, that there is a certain sameness and melancholy in this place of entertainment, which, with all its grandeur, gives disgust: people of rank accordingly never spend more than two hours there.

Vauxhall Gardens are situated in a pleasant village of the same name, on the banks of the Thames, about two miles distant from Westminster-bridge; and part of the company go there by water. One shilling only is paid for entrance, and it is not at all uncommon to see six thousand persons there at once. The walks are but badly lighted; in some places, however, the lamps, which consist of a great variety of colours, are distributed with great taste. The orchestra, which is in the open air, is placed under an amphitheatre, erected in form of a temple, surrounded with elegant porticoes, and brilliantly illuminated. In the most agreeable part of the garden, there is a statue erected in honour of Handel, and this is the only one in the whole place.

About forty years since, a new association, under the name of the *Attic Society*, was formed in the capital. This was held in a noble hall, where sometimes vocal and sometimes instrumental music, but always of an exquisite kind, was introduced between compositions in poetry and prose, which were recited in the most elegant and engaging manner.

A foreigner occasioned the annihilation of this rational entertainment, soon after its institution. One may with great justice affirm, that this person has in an eminent degree contributed to the progress of luxury in England; and it is not a little remarkable, that a woman who has occasioned such an extraordinary revolution in the manners and the pleasures of a nation, should be at this moment languishing amidst all the horrors of wretchedness.

* This lady is a native of Germany; an honour, however, which none of her countrymen has ever claimed, either in her affluence or adversity. She arrived in London about twenty-five years since, at an age when a person of her sex has no right to flatter herself with making conquests. Indeed she possessed neither youth nor beauty, and was so ignorant that she could only speak bad German, and a few words of French.

Who could have imagined, that a person of this kind would have *set the fashions* to the most capricious and phlegmatic nation Europe?

At first so far was she from forming sanguine expectations, that her utmost efforts were exerted in supplying her daily wants. Her means of existence depended entirely on her voice, which had nothing extraordinary in it; with it, however, she resolved to captivate the public. In consequence of this determination, she procured three musicians, and gave concerts at one shilling a ticket. Being successful in her undertaking, she augmented her orchestra, and raised the price of entrance.

Soon afterwards, her happy stars made her acquainted with a lady of quality, who became captivated with her talents; for although Mrs. Cornelys could neither sing nor speak with elegance, she nevertheless possessed a sound judgment, an uncommon taste, and an imagination inexhaustible in inventions.

From this moment, she conceived the idea of gratifying the English nobility by entertainments, such indeed as had never before her time been seen in Europe. In consequence of this plan, she hired Carlisle-House, furnished it in a most magnificent style, and procured two thousand seven hundred subscribers. On the anniversary of the institution, she was allowed to give a masked ball, to which any one could be admitted by a ticket, the price of
which

which was two guineas. She herself has often assured me, that on these occasions she has had upwards of eight thousand visitors.

The magical genius of this woman knew how to vary her entertainments in a thousand different shapes. Sometimes she exhibited colonades, and triumphal arches, grandly illuminated; at other times she metamorphosed her apartments into gardens, planted with walks of orange-trees and adorned with fountains, inscriptions, and transparent paintings, surrounded by garlands of flowers, and variegated lamps of a thousand beautiful tints. A whole *suit* of rooms were richly furnished, so as to imitate the manners and luxury of foreign nations, in the Indian, Persian, and Chinese styles, while nine thousand wax-candles, placed with great art, produced a fine effect to the spectators.

The fairy queen of this enchanted place knew no other avarice than *glory*; money had few or no charms for her, and she thought herself amply recompensed by the praises that were lavished on her taste.

Far from amassing riches, she contracted immense debts. She owed to her wax-chandler alone, three thousand pounds.

This carelessness and prodigality at last occasioned her to be arrested, and afterwards sent to the King's-Bench prison. Her situation was then truly singular; she obtained permission, during *term time*, now and then to spread pleasure and joy throughout the capital, and was obliged next day to return to gaol.

In a short time her creditors seized on her effects; and after having for twelve years, by her luxurious and voluptuous entertainments, merited the appellation of the *Queen of taste*, she is now actually obliged to subsist on the casual assistance of her former benefactors.

The construction of the Phanteon, which in grandeur and extent exceeds that of Rome, proves that Mrs. Cornelys's lessons were not thrown away upon the English, The subscription, which amounted to seventy thousand pounds sterling, was not sufficient to complete such a noble edifice. Every thing that is great, majestic, and magnificent, has been displayed in this temple of Comus.

At a masked-ball, at which I was present, the looking-glasses with which the dome and the other apartments were furnished, cost thirty-six thousand pounds sterling; they were not, however, bought, but only hired for the occasion. The most brilliant concerts are generally given here; and this is one of the few public places, except the theatres, that the royal family honour with their presence. The managers recompense in a noble manner the musicians who perform at this place. The celebrated *Ajugari* sung here during the winter of 1777, and had one hundred pounds sterling a night, although he gave only two ariettes each time.

Masquerades are sometimes given at the Pantheon, and sometimes at the Opera-House. This kind of diversion, however grand it may appear, in other respects does not seem in the least congenial to the national character, which is grave, and but little allied to the follies of dancing and grimace. The crowds of masks, and the ingenious and magnificent dresses displayed on those occasions, are the only circumstances that can give any pleasure to a native, or even a foreigner.

The King is a great enemy to this diversion, and it is said that his majesty was acquainted with general Luttrell's project in the year 1771, to disturb an entertainment of this kind by going there in *character* of a corpse.

The English still continue to take a great delight in the public gardens, near the metropolis, where
they

they assemble and drink tea together, in the open air. The number of these in the neighbourhood of the capital is amazing, and the order, regularity, neatness, and even elegance of them, are truly admirable. They, however, are very rarely frequented by people of fashion; But the middle and lower ranks go there often, and seem much delighted with the music of an organ, which is usually played in an adjoining building.

Of all the nations in Europe, the English are most susceptible of the pleasures of *walking*. It is on account of this, that London possesses so many charming places for indulging that propensity. St. James's-park, the Green-park, and Kensington-gardens, are frequented by a prodigious concourse of people, and on a Sunday are visited by thousands. The Royal Gardens at Kew, Richmond, and Hampton-court, also draw a number into the country during the summer.

The pleasures of the chase, of which the English are still very fond, are followed with great avidity during the autumn. It is not at all uncommon to see an hundred men on horseback, leaping hedges, ditches, and five-barred gates after a fox. The laws in regard to hunting are strictly observed, and shelter the farmer from the injuries so usual in other nations.

Among the diversions most common in the country, may be reckoned *fives* and *bowls*; the spectators are always interested in the game, by means of betts. It is very singular, that *shooting at a mark* is never practised in any part of England: the reason, however, is plain; they have not fortified towns to defend; and are in no fear of an invasion. Of course there is nothing to induce them to an exercise, from which no utility could result.

Horse-races are among the number of those diversions peculiar to the genius of the nation. The

ancient Greeks were also fascinated with the same amusement, and similar sports were celebrated by the poets of that famous people. A foreigner can never feel himself so much interested in these, as an Englishman; he will be fully satisfied with having seen them once. About twenty years since, a famous horse called *Chilfers*, who said to have been the best courser ever seen in England, died. On this occasion, a thousand portraits were engraved of him, and his praises were sung in every street. On an inscription below the print, it was asserted that, after an exact calculation, this animal had been proved to be *fleetier than the wind*.

The passion for betting, that prevails on the race-grounds of Newmarket, and Epsom, is astonishing. It is not uncommon to see persons risk all their fortunes there on a single match.

Asi-racing is also very frequent, in the neighbourhood of country towns: they cannot, however, be placed among the number of the national diversions; yet wagers are frequently laid, even upon them.

The passion for betting is so very strong among the English, that the pensioners of Chelsea and Greenwich Hospitals, being unable to indulge themselves in either horse or asi-races, have been known to wager on the *speed* of vermin.

I shall finish this sketch of the favourite diversions among these people, with some account of their Clubs, which are generally a source both of pleasure and utility: these clubs add very much to the society, and serve to propagate their republican genius and public spirit. The number in the capital is astonishing. Every rank and situation of life has one peculiarly adapted to itself, and each has its own proper and distinct name.

The members of some of them are so opulent, and so numerous, that they often subscribe large sums, by means of which they carry their plans of patriotism,

patriotism, or charity into execution. Among these are the *Humane Society*, which gives premiums for preserving the lives of their fellow-creatures; the *Whig Club*, which guards against the usurpations of the sovereign; and the *Bill of Rights*, which watches over the privileges of the nation: this latter was one of the chief supports of Mr. Wilkes.

But of all these, the most extraordinary without doubt are the *Debating Societies*, whose members meet merely to dispute. Such institutions exist in no other city in Europe. There is one called the *Robin Hood*, which has continued from the beginning of the present century, and has had the honour of being frequented by Swift, Goldsmith, Foote, Garrick, and a crowd of celebrated men.

It is in this society, that a great number of famous lawyers and orators, among whom may be included lord Mansfield, first displayed their talents to the public.

I have been often astonished in these assemblies (for they are now very numerous in London) to see the lowest of the populace evince a perfect knowledge of ancient and modern history. The application which they make of this, and the arguments which they opposed to their adversaries, appeared to me very wonderful.

Those of my readers, who are prejudiced against the English nation, and who, consequently, may be tempted to accuse me of partiality in delineating their character, and praising their noble, generous, and disinterested manner of thinking and of acting are requested, after the almost infinite number of facts which I have recited in the course of this work, to read the following, as it will speak very forcibly in favour of my argument.

I happened one evening in the month of December, 1778, to visit the Debating Society in Fosterlane, Cheapside. The war had just broke out between

tween England and France ; and it is well known that the English had good reason, at that time, to be irritated against all their enemies. The national antipathy therefore, against the French, was carried to its utmost extent among all ranks and degrees of the people,

It was at this critical period that a Frenchman had the rashness to venture into the assembly, and to rise to defend the conduct of his countrymen in regard to the American war. I could scarce believe my eyes, and I know not whether I was most astonished at the imprudence of the Frenchman, or the liberality of the English, who allowed him to proceed. Let any one represent to his own imagination, this foreigner appearing in the middle of a hostile nation, and in a barbarous and disagreeable accent abusing them: will he not be astonished when I inform him that he was heard with the utmost attention, and so far from being treated with contempt, thanked by the chairman “ for having so much confidence in the generosity of the English nation, as to deliver his sentiments with candour, and frankness, on the most delicate and interesting subjects !!!”

CHAPTER XI.

Reflections on the Finances—The English Liberty and Constitution—Marine—Pressing of Seamen—Greenwich Hospital—Sailors—Admiral Keppel—Army—Militia. East-India Company—Arts and Sciences—British Museum—Style of the English Gardens—Conclusion.

IF the reader will give himself the trouble to weigh with care the great number of facts and anecdotes with which I have been anxious to intersperse my Observations on England, he will find that the pretended declension of that empire, foretold and announced by so many contemporary writers, has not as yet taken place.

That kingdom, however, is at this very moment in a critical, if not a desperate situation, notwithstanding her foreign connections, her riches, her commerce, and her influence.

Great-Britain, which cannot naturally be considered, in the balance of Europe, but as belonging to the second order of kingdoms, has been elevated to the rank of one of the first powers in the world by bravery, wealth, liberty, and the happy consequences of an excellent political system. For many years that island wielded the trident of Neptune in her victorious hand, and absolute mistress of the ocean, covered every sea with her fleets. It will be a problem for posterity to solve, how that state has created and maintained such an extensive commerce, and amassed such immense riches, at a time when
the

the spirit of industry had made so great a progress among her neighbours, and even Holland herself had procured a decided superiority over all the other powers on the continent.

But although the sun of English greatness is not yet set, it is probable that in a few years we shall see the power of that people extinguished; not insensibly, but all at once. The very first war that they are so rash as to engage in, will, perhaps, whatever may be its event, precipitate this fatal and too certain catastrophe. In the political, as in the national world, death has planted the seeds of destruction along with those of existence; and though those may discover and unfold themselves, either sooner or later, yet in the end they will never feel their effect.

Let us recollect that, but a very few years since, a national debt of a hundred millions gave the utmost tension that it was then susceptible of to the spring of this political machine. The facility, however, with which they found means to pay off the interest of this immense sum, made them believe, that they possessed an inexhaustible source of riches, and begat the most dangerous security. They are now, however, though perhaps too late, recovered from this fatal error: a national debt, amounting to the immense sum of two hundred and sixty millions, has at length opened their eyes; the annual revenue is at present incompetent to supply the annual expenditure, which, even in time of peace, amounts to more than fourteen millions. If we add to this, the interest of a debt of one hundred millions, which England must contract the first war she is involved in, it will be politically impossible for the nation to sustain such an additional burthen without becoming bankrupt.

If any unforeseen circumstance should occasion this war, the consequence would be terrible. The
ruin

ruin of the richest and most distinguished families would inevitably ensue: the commerce and the maritime greatness of the English would be attacked in their most mortal parts; and that nation, now so powerful, would be reduced for ever among the second order of European states.

It is perhaps impossible to avert this frightful catastrophe; the sagest precautions could scarce diminish the evil, or render the consequences less terrible. This awful moment is approaching with the most rapid and alarming celerity; no one, however, has the resolution to oppose it, and all seem to allow themselves blindly to be led towards the horrid abyss.

I do not, however, know whether a national bankruptcy would involve the bank of England in its ruin. That machine which is conducted with a complicated, but an excellent mechanism, is the chief support of the credit of the state. of all the great trading companies, and of the principal merchants in the capital, and the provincial towns, both of England and Scotland. Its business is carried on not by means of gold, but paper; which will be no longer esteemed, than during the opinion which the public entertain of its value.

To see the excellence of the system adopted by this great people, in its full extent, it ought to be recollected, that notwithstanding the immense commerce of England, in every part of the globe, and her riches, which have become proverbial, yet it is probable, that the *quantum* of ready money circulated throughout the kingdom is very small. According to the best calculation, it does not exceed twenty millions of pounds sterling.

This sum, which scarce served to carry on the American war for a single year, is but little more than what the economy of a certain German sovereign has hoarded up in a short time, and that too in a country not famous for its riches. Similar comparisons

sons will give occasion to many reflections; and I dare affirm, without either being absurd or ridiculous, that a single city in the Empire possesses a larger portion of *specie* than all Great-Britain.

The spirit of activity and industry, which animates the whole nation, is the reason that this deficiency of *coin* is not perceptible. As sums of any consequence are generally paid in bank notes, and every object of trade is accomplished by means of paper, it necessarily follows, that *ready money* is never employed but in regard to trifling demands. This occasions that astonishing and continual circulation, of which Paris, and Amsterdam furnish us with a very faint idea, but which, however, is merely *illusiv*e, when compared to real wealth.

Bank notes, of which the number and the amount are equally unknown, but are said by estimation to exceed more than a hundred millions sterling, together with the astonishing quantity of manufactured commodities, compose the national wealth of England: as long, therefore, as her *paper* maintains its credit, and her warehouses remain furnished, no person will, I think, be inclined to refuse to that island the first rank amongst the richest nations in Europe.

Foreigners have but a very small share in the national debt; the English themselves are the greatest creditors of the state. The liquidation of this debt has given rise to the schemes of a multitude of projectors, each of whom affirms, that nothing in the world is more easy. But even their most ingenious plans have proved the great difficulty of such an enterprise. Sometimes even political miracles are performed: but then they must be at least probable; and unfortunately, the payment of two hundred and sixty millions sterling, to which the first war will add another hundred millions, is among those things that may be reckoned impossible. It has been calculated,

culated that if a circle of half crowns was to be formed around the circumference of our globe, this almost inconceivable sum would not be sufficient to pay the national debt.

However unfortunate the consequences of a national bankruptcy would be to England, they might still be supportable, if they did not affect its political constitution and civil liberty: the loss of two such inestimable blessings would be fatal indeed.

Both France and Germany still contain a great number of visionary men, who, misled by the turbulent and unquiet genius of the Americans, have attempted to prove that the English constitution abounds with a number of the grossest imperfections. They hoped to see on the other side of the Atlantic ocean, the idea of a perfect republic realized. They imagined that so many great men, instructed by the experience of past ages, and capable of pointing out to their fellow-citizens the true road to happiness would give grandeur, liberty, and stability, to this new confederation. They have, however been disappointed in their hopes: the spirit of anarchy seems to distract the councils of America; and the opinion which the illustrious Montesquieu formed, concerning the English government, is now confirmed.

It is after this great man that I dare to affirm, that there exists no-where a constitution better adapted than that of England for a powerful society, in which all the individuals are to partake of freedom.

After having read this work, it will be impossible I think, to forget the value of English liberty: all that I could add further on this head, would be useless: let me however be permitted to mention one more observation, concerning the government.

The equilibrium, or balance of the three bodies who possess the exercise of the legislative power, is truly admirable. The King, the House of Peers, and

and the Commons of England, are three distinct powers, entirely independent of one another, each enjoying privileges and rights peculiar to itself, mutually observing these, and watching constantly against the infringements of them. The king is the sole source, from whence all honours and dignities flow; but as he can neither make new laws, nor add to old ones, his preponderance is not so great in the scale as might be expected.

The House of Peers, besides possessing a share in the legislative power, is also the supreme court of justice in England: it is on this account that the twelve judges, who as such are not peers of parliament, and who are not permitted to deliver their sentiments, unless when called upon, sit among them.

The grand exclusive privilege of the House of Commons, is the possession of the key of the public treasury. Money being in our planet the prime mover of all things, it follows that this last body does not yield in point of importance to the two former. The Commons also have a right to impeach state criminals, even if they should be members of the Upper-house. On such occasions, a minister, though protected by the monarch himself, cannot escape a trial. Therefore, when an accusation for high treason is brought into the House of Peers, no defence which may be brought, nor protection which can be exhibited, will prevent the supposed culprit from being committed to the Tower.

According to Montesquieu, the movements of the political machine in England occasion a continual display of envy, jealousy, avarice, and ambition, which the national liberty allows to appear in their full extent. From the opposition of these passions, factions are produced, which, striking against each other, like the waves of the ocean, reunite and separate anew. These factions, which at a certain distance

distance appear to be hurtful, will, when more nearly considered, be found to produce that alternate succession of good and evil which preserves the constitution of every free state

Sir Robert Walpole adopted two maxims, seemingly very strange: "That every man has his price, and it is only necessary to know that, to be able to procure his support: And, that an English minister is often under the necessity of purchasing the voice of a member of parliament, not to vote against, but according to his conscience."

As there is no political object concerning which it is possible to conceive so many erroneous ideas as the English constitution, we need not be astonished at the prejudices and falsities with which the writing of so many learned foreigners abound. It is not long since the author of a certain critical work, published in Germany, pretended that Schlozer had given a proof of the most flagrant partiality, by affirming, that the Americans commenced the war against England without being impelled by sufficient motives; and that, now it was finished, they had not reaped those advantages which they expected. This profound and philosophical historian has advanced nothing concerning an event, perhaps the most remarkable in the present age without the maturest reflection. But in what consisted the pretended oppression of that people? Was it not an oppression by which they enjoyed an equal degree of liberty with the freest nations in Europe, England excepted, and by which, in a few years, they acquired a degree of splendour till then unexampled in history?—Their complaints were undoubtedly just, but surely not sufficiently strong to authorise them to have recourse to arms, as neither their privileges nor their religion were attacked. If they now retain but some feeble traces of their former greatness, If
their

their national happiness is only a vague and a chimerical idea, it will be perhaps allowed, that the long and bloody contest with England has been at once equally unsuccessful and disadvantageous.

Great-Britain possesses no fortresses ; for one surely cannot give that name to some ramparts, and bastions, erected at the entrance of her harbours, or to the Tower of London, that celebrated state prison, formerly the source of so many horrible cruelties. This is now no more than a fort, the walls and gates of which are merely sufficient to stop a tumultuous populace. Its arsenals are less celebrated on account of the warlike stores which they contain, than for the antique and uncommon pieces of armour, guns, mortars, &c. to be met with there. On a platform next to the river, is a battery of sixty large cannon, which however, are of no service, but to fire a salute on the birth day of the sovereign, or that of any of the royal family.

An Englishman who has never visited the continent, can have no adequate idea of a fortified place. The ocean, and the floating castles which it sustains, are the sole and indeed the proper bulwarks of the kingdom, and have for more than a thousand years baffled the enterprises of its enemies. If it had been possible to effect a landing in Great-Britain, that project would have been attempted during the American war, at the time when the English fleet, dispersed through the four quarters of the globe, allowed the combined fleet to attempt any thing in the channel. Notwithstanding the great preparations made on purpose, such a dangerous experiment was not tried.

In the year 1761, a project of this kind was formed by the duke de Choiseul, who was then prime minister of France. Six thousand flat-bottomed boats were prepared, the coast sounded, the place of landing determined upon, and, in one

word

word, all the precautions taken likely to insure the most certain success. The English government, however, having received a circumstantial detail of the whole plan, took such effectual measures, that the idea was abandoned. The discovery was made in Paris, by means of an Irishman, of the name of Mac Allester, who by a bold and successful attempt made himself master of the secret. In consequence of this, he set off for London, and fortunately arrived safe with the necessary documents. At the peace, this gentleman was gratified with a considerable sum of money as a recompence for his services.

The excellence of the English navy can only be discovered by those persons, who, being acquainted with the state of the fleets belonging to the other European nations, are enabled to judge by comparison. It is only on board an English man of war, which is handsome, commodious, and even magnificent, that a proper idea can be formed of the character and the riches of that people. An abundance, unknown in the vessels of other nations, prevails there; and a number of happy inventions, which can only be imitated by foreigners in a very imperfect manner. These vessels are sheathed with copper, provided with ventilators, ovens, machines for calculating the longitude, alembics for freshening salt water, &c. &c.

The English, in fine, have contrived, by a thousand different expedients, to obviate the dangerous accidents and disagreeable circumstances attendant on long voyages.

The subordination on board their navy is extraordinary; it surpasses the discipline of a Prussian army. Even the first lieutenant, who is the second person on board, dares never to approach the captain without saluting him with the most profound respect, and paying the most implicit obedience to his commands.

mands. The first thing that the officers do on a morning is, to inform themselves *what humour the captain is in*; his authority being so extensive, that it is absolutely in his power to make the lives of all those around him either happy or miserable. An old sailor, who attended me almost constantly during my stay at Portsmouth, expressed this in one short and emphatic sentence: "A ship of war," said he, "is either a heaven or a hell, according to the character and temper of the commander."

Notwithstanding the situation of England; which has laid her under the necessity from time immemorial to have recourse to a navy for support, her marine was very contemptible in former times. Every maritime town was then obliged to furnish a certain number of vessels in time of war, and these, which were always merchantmen, were filled with soldiers. The city of London fitted out twenty-five vessels, containing six hundred and sixty-two men, to assist Edward III. in the conquest of France. The epoch of the English marine was the reign of Elizabeth; and since that time it has increased to the astonishing degree of greatness and perfection, which it has attained in our days. At the end of the American war, it consisted of three hundred and forty-six ships, great and small. Some of these carried one thousand seamen; every one of whom cost the government four pounds per month.

It is almost impossible to conceive the prodigious quantity of provisions, and ammunition, with which the store-houses belonging to the navy are filled. The principal magazines are undoubtedly at Portsmouth and Plymouth; but even in the smallest, such as those at Chatham, Deptford, Sheerness, and Woolwich, there is such an abundance of every necessary, that in one of these, more naval stores are deposited than in all the arsenals of Italy.

The

The manner of *manning* the navy in time of war, is of all the customs in England the most blameable, the more especially as it is not warranted by the laws. As the sailors are forced into the service, and as they on such occasions generally make a stout resistance, the most bloody scenes are frequently occasioned by these encounters. Every friend of humanity must revolt at the idea of a press gang in a free country; a practise that entirely overturns every principle of English liberty. Some of the most elegant writers have decried this mode of procuring seamen, and the greatest orators declaimed in parliament against such a scandalous perversion of power; but the doctrine of *necessity* has hitherto stifled every other consideration. It was in vain that, during the last war, bounties were held out to the seamen; avarice tempted but a few; the greater number rather chose to enter on board merchantmen, where there is neither danger nor subordination.

Greenwich hospital is well calculated to encourage the navy. It is one of the noblest and most beautiful buildings in Europe. Its situation on the banks of the Thames is extremely agreeable, and it is fine embellished by majestic domes, colonades, statues, pictures, &c. This establishment serves as an asylum for many thousand invalid sailors, and a still greater number of out pensioners draw their daily subsistence from it. They eat in common, are allowed two clean shirts a week, and have new beds every year. Each person sleeps by himself. The neatness which reign throughout this edifice is truly admirable, and worthy of imitation.

The English seamen form a particular class by themselves. From their most tender infancy, they are more accustomed to the sea than the land, and never fail to become as boisterous as the elements with which they have been familiar. Add to this,
the

the prejudices common to the rest of the nation, and you may easily conceive that this body of men have something original about them. The manner in which they spend their prize-money, got in time of war, and the hardships which they endure without grumbling, seem to realise and confirm the proverb so common in England, "that their sailors get their money like horses, and spend it like asses."

The higher classes of officers in the navy are greatly respected, on account of their knowledge, their valour, and their experience. Of between seventeen and eighteen who commanded squadrons during the American war, not a single one could be taxed with incapacity.

A great number of their admirals are actually models of honour and probity. Among these, I beg leave to mention admiral Keppel, who, in the year 1779, by the intrigues of Lord Sandwich, was tried by a naval court-martial.

The captain of a man of war is generally a person of some consideration in England. I knew an old gentleman called captain O'Brien, who had the honour of entertaining the kings of Portugal and Sicily on board his ship. The pay allowed in the navy is very considerable, and foreigners, on that account, wish for employments in the service; but the jealousy of the people prevents it. Commissions in the sea service are never *venal*, and men of the first rank and quality are obliged to rise from the lowest stations.

The great attention paid to the navy occasions the land forces to be neglected. In the army, commissions are bought and sold: a barbarous usage, and diametrically opposite to all the principles of a military establishment. The ambition of a land officer is entirely stifled by the little respect paid to his profession: he therefore neglects his duty, and loses all relish for the service. There are some English

English generals, to whom the subalterns of a Prussian regiment could give lessons on the art of war.

As a free people are, with great reason, jealous of nothing so much as a large army in time of peace, all the good patriots declare against it. In the commencement of the year 1782, the regular troops in England amounted to only 29,345: some members of parliament, however, spoke of this as an *abuse*, and wished the number to be considerably decreased.

A standing army is now become a necessary evil, in all the European states; and the English have at length been constrained to adopt this custom: they are, however, extremely careful to provide against the bad consequences resulting from it. The troops are paid and maintained by an act of parliament, called the mutiny bill; but as it remains in force for only twelve months, it must be renewed at the expiration of that period, by the three branches of the legislature; else the army is of course annihilated. As long as this law continues unrepealed, the English need never be apprehensive of arbitrary power. The incredible celerity with which the last revolution in Sweden was effected, cannot encourage, much less serve as a model for, a king of England. The better, nay, the most numerous part of the Swedish nation desired to see the monarch more independent in respect to his authority, and less restricted in the exercise of his prerogative: they therefore longed for a signal to second his intentions. In England, on the contrary, a similar wish could exist in no other heart, than that of a despicable courtier, or an inhabitant of Bedlam.

The liberty of the nation is also supported by a still more potent auxiliary, which the people acquired under the wise administration of lord Chatham.—This master-piece of policy, like a
N
thousand

thousand other interesting circumstances concerning England, is either unknown or undervalued in Germany.—I now allude to the militia; an idea original in its kind, and respectable by its consequences in the eyes of the philosopher and the statesman. Although it somewhat resembles a similar establishment on the continent, it must however be allowed by every impartial man, that the militia of Switzerland cannot be compared with that of England.

As it was determined that these troops were not to serve in foreign countries, but were only intended to defend their families, their household gods, and the altars of their religion, all the people in the kingdom, respectable on account of their wealth, their rank, and their employments, offered their services, and were enrolled in troops levied solely for the defence of the nation. Lord Rochford who had been ambassador in France, the duke of Richmond, at this present moment a minister of state, and a lieutenant-general in the army, the marquis of Lansdowne, the dukes of Devonshire, Manchester, &c. all thought it an honour to serve in this patriotic body. The duke of Grafton, after he had been dismissed from his situation of prime minister of England, accepted the command of a regiment of militia, and actually submitted to the orders of general (now lord) Amherst, whom he had a few months before obliged to wait his leisure in an antichamber.

The duke, decorated with the order of the garter, was seen during the review at Coxheath, confounded in the ranks with the other officers. This review was one of the most singular spectacles that I have ever beheld during the course of my travels. The camp consisted of eighteen thousand soldiers, all of whom, but two or three battalions, were militia. For many years here had not been such a
great

great army in the neighbourhood of the capital. Prodigious crowds were, therefore, attracted by the novelty of the circumstance : the sovereign himself, to whom it was also new, having never before seen but few regiments in Hyde-Park, was so transported with the scene, that he cried out to the commander in chief, " O Amherst, what a fine sight this is ! " This exclamation, as the king was at that time very unpopular, gave occasion to many sharp and satirical remarks.

A body of eighteen thousand men has not any thing in its appearance that can excite the wonder of a soldier, more especially a German one ; it was something more worthy of the eye of a philosopher than that of a military man, which attracted my attention.

There is no difference either in the discipline, evolutions, or exercise of the militia and the regulars ; at least, my eye, although accustomed to the Prussian exercise, could not perceive any. On the contrary, the former distinguish themselves by their activity, and attachment to their duty. It seems to me, that those men who serve the state by choice, serve it also with pleasure.

The army is, in general, a strange mixture of men, commanded for the most part by officers whose necessities oblige them to follow that profession : the nobility prefer the militia.

A certain great monarch of the present age had not a proper idea of this establishment, else he would not have been offended with the court of St. James's for sending a minister plenipotentiary to him, who had only the rank of major in the militia.

The duke of Manchester, a colonel belonging to the same body, was actually at that time in the quality of ambassador at the court of Versailles.

The national militia, in the year 1778, formed an army of twenty thousand men; since that time, it has been proposed to increase them to forty thousand.

The East-India company may be looked upon as a political phenomenon. This society of merchants possesses territories, the inhabitants belonging to which amount to sixteen millions. England, Scotland, and Ireland, hardly contain half so many. During the last war, they maintained at their own expence an army of eighty thousand men. The revenues of their dominions amount to more than six millions of pounds annually, and some of their servants have, in a few years, realized fortunes of little less than half a million sterling! To give a proper idea of their immense riches, I have only to remark to the reader, that if the sovereigns of Denmark, Sweden, Naples, Sardinia, and Poland, were to unite the sums yearly levied in their kingdoms, they would not amount to so much as those received by the East India company.

It sacrifices about two millions per annum, to support its military establishment in time of peace; and in time of war the expence is nearly doubled: for they do not possess the talent in Asia, as in Europe, to persuade, or rather to force, the soldier to encounter all the horrors of war, for a morsel of bread, and a drop of water. Not only the English troops, but the sepoys, receive large pay in that part of the world.

The debt of the East-India company, in 1785, amounted to seven millions; a moderate sum when compared with their revenue, and which, by the adoption of a proper system of economy, they might soon pay off. It is the want of this economy, which at such an immense distance from Europe it is very difficult to enforce, joined to the insatiable avarice of their servants, both civil and military, that

that has repeatedly brought the proprietors to the verge of bankruptcy: it is certain, however, that Mr. Pitt's bill put an end to many abuses.

In the year 1776, the company had a fleet of forty nine-ships, each carrying twenty guns, in their service, without including a prodigious number of small vessels employed in trading on the coasts of Asia. Sixteen of the larger vessels have since been deducted from this number, on account of the representation of the lords of the admiralty, who pretended that so many vessels of their dimensions occasioned a scarcity of timber, which could not be supplied by any other part of the world but their own forests.

The present state of the arts and sciences in England, is too well known to my countrymen, for me to pretend to say any thing new on that important head. I shall, however, take the liberty to make a few reflections on that subject.

The foundation of literary society in that country is liberty; that liberty which the natives have continually before their eyes, and which they never lose sight of in any of their pursuits. They do not know what it is to be excited to study by means of pensions which are indeed little less than honourable fetters, that prevent us from saying and writing what we please.

The Royal Society includes amongst its members the greatest part of the English peerage, as does also the Antiquarian Society, which first made us acquainted with the celebrated ruins of Palmyra, Balbec, and Athens. The nobility do not in general contribute by means of their writings to the splendour of letters, and the progress of science; they willingly, however, employ their riches in defraying the expences of these establishments.

The learned in other parts of Europe form a class by themselves, and are in general either persecuted

cuted or despised. In England, the ministers, the magistrates, the barristers, the physicians, the clergy, the artists, the merchants, and even the military, all in one word, think it a glory to be thought men of letters, and to forget, when they assemble together, every circumstance that appertains to their rank or their occupations. The Royal Academy has a certain part of Somerset-house assigned to the purposes of their institution. In this noble mansion which may be called a palace (for it is one of the noblest efforts of modern architecture) they have an annual exhibition of the works of the greatest painters.

It is well known that, in England, distinguished merit may aspire to honours and dignities with more certainty of success than in any other country. I could quote examples of this without number; such as those of Prior, Addison, and a great many more, whose writings raised them to the most distinguished offices in the state. Locke was appointed to the honourable and lucrative situation of Master of the Mint, and was succeeded in his employment by the immortal Newton. Bacon, Clarendon, and Chatham acquired their fortunes and their titles solely by their personal merit, and their attachment to the sciences.

Services done to the nation never fail being remunerated in a manner worthy of a great people. The elder Forster is, perhaps, the only instance to the contrary. He had the misfortune to incur the hatred of a minister unworthy of his high rank, and who, notwithstanding that he had once treated him with the warmest regard, persecuted him afterwards with a decided, and unmerited aversion. The destiny of this learned man was peculiarly unfortunate: at a time when his affairs were very much deranged, he had of his own accord presented the Queen with a great many birds from the islands in the Southern Ocean, which it had cost him much labour and many years to collect and preserve, and which he
could

could have sold at a very high price in England. Her Majesty accepted the present, and, to the astonishment of every one, forgot to recompence this celebrated traveller.

His son seems to have been enveloped in the unhappy destiny of his father. England lost him while very young, and Germany, to this day, laments his death. Never did any other foreigner write the English language with so much elegance and precision. Many of the critics rank the history of his voyages among the number of their classical works.

Baretti, a learned Italian, who has resided more than twenty years in London, has also attempted to write in English, but without success.

This author does not believe the character of his nation. Entirely unacquainted with every thing that concerns the people among whom he has lived for so many years; not devoid, however, of sense, but yet superstitious in the extreme; this person has not entirely forgotten the use of the poignard; for some time since he assassinated an Englishman, in the open street, who according to his account, had attacked him.

Such an atrocious action subjected him to a criminal prosecution: he, however, escaped punishment, because there was no witness to the transaction; and the *dead man*, who alone knew the truth, could not appear to contradict him*.

N 4

The

* The translator here begs leave to observe, that he should do violence to his own feelings, if he did not state, that an English jury, after a full investigation of this transaction, acquitted Mr. Baretti, who instead of assassinating an unoffending man, as is implied by the text, only defended his own life against the assaults of a ruffian. Some of the first characters in the kingdom attended the trial, and gave the most honourable testimonies of the worth and goodness of a gentleman, whose life was shortened by the most cruel neglect, and whose very memory has been loaded with unmerited obloquy.

The British Museum is rather a monument of the progress of the arts and sciences, than the means of giving them a higher degree of perfection. The cabinet of natural history, and the collection of manuscripts, medals mechanical inventions, &c. are very interesting, and in point of value almost inestimable. To these, the nation every year makes new additions, not unworthy of the wealth and the greatness of the people.

Sometimes whole cabinets are bought, and incorporated with this immense collection; there was one year for example, when the parliament purchased the cabinet of the celebrated Sir William Hamilton, for the sum of eleven thousand pounds sterling. In the museum, a copy of Magna Charta is preserved. The printed books are contemptible, in point of number, and but ill agree with the rest of this magnificent establishment. They ought to be augmented.

The house itself is undoubtedly one of the finest, the most spacious, and most agreeable mansion in the metropolis; it was built by Montague, the favourite of Charles II. To this noble enterprise, he set apart a large portion of an immense fortune. The most famous painters belonging to the court of that magnificent and voluptuous monarch, such as La Fosse, Rousseau, and Monnayer, here exhausted all the charms and the secrets of their art. Their works are viewed even at this day with rapture. The order and the arrangement which prevail in this institution, are not, however, equal to the other parts of such a noble establishment.

The greatest collection of coins and medals, perhaps in the whole world, belongs to a private gentleman of London. It is to Dr. Hunter, a famous physician, who amassed great riches by his profession, and who died some years since, that the nation is indebted for this superb cabinet; to the
furnishing

furnishing of which he dedicated fifty years, and more than one half of an immense fortune. It is now still more valuable, as it has been greatly augmented within these last ten years.

An Englishman of the name of * Duane, possessed a collection almost equal to the former. A great number of coins struck by the Parthians, and many other nations celebrated in ancient history, rendered this cabinet uncommonly interesting. Hunter purchased and added this to his own.

The immense cabinet of natural history, belonging to Sir Ashton Lever†, is another proof of English magnificence. Never, perhaps, has human industry formed such a complete collection of rare and valuable birds!

The manner of laying out their gardens, is the sole art in which the English have not taken some model for their guide. The disgusting sameness, and tedious uniformity, which all Europe had adopted, was despised by them: they therefore followed Nature step by step, and only called in Art now and then to their assistance. This method, for a long time the subject of raillery and disdain to other nations, begins every day to find new partisans.

The traces of labour are almost imperceptible in the formation of an English garden: and yet, nevertheless, the expences are very considerable: the lawns, which resemble so many verdant carpets, must be constantly cut, and attended to with uncommon care. The gardeners also receive great wages.

It is singular, that there is not, throughout the whole kingdom, one garden in the French style; they are all entirely in a taste peculiar to themselves.

N 5

The

* Mr. Duane is since dead.

† Sir Ashton Lever is also dead, and his collection is now in the possession of Mr. Parkinson.

The most remarkable, on account of their beauty and extent, are the Marquis of Buckingham's at Stowe, the Duke of Devonshire's at Chatsworth, and the King's at Kew.

Other parts of the country abound with parks, so charming and romantic, that nothing seems wanting but shepherds, to make the beholder imagine himself in the midst of one of the most delicious provinces of Arcadia. The principal of these are situated at Richmond, Windsor, and Greenwich.

I HAVE now given a sketch of that famous Island, the people of which, according to Bossuet, like the ocean that surrounds them, are in perpetual commotion; an observation which a hundred years experience seems to confirm. In England, events are continually taking place, which merit the attention of every philosophical observer, and elevate the annals of the present age to the historical dignity of ancient times. LIBERTY, that inexpressible blessing is, and has always been, the source of all these heroical and sublime actions, which only excite our barren admiration.

Long before the people had acquired, or, if you will, conquered their great charter, Alfred inserted these remarkable words in his last will. "The English ought to be as free as their thoughts." No people abhor despotism, and every thing that may lead to it, so much as these proud Islanders. This aversion justifies the exclamation of Macaulay, the celebrated female historian: "The sight of a despot," says she, "has never sullied the purity of my regards."

No nation can boast of having for so long a period of time possessed so many social and political blessings.

blessings. To see many millions of men, enjoying an uninterrupted possession of rights, worthy of the dignity of human nature, is a circumstance unexampled in history.

It is in that fortunate island alone, that the accumulation of riches, luxury, pleasures, and all their dangerous consequences, has not given to any one class of citizens a pernicious and dangerous ascendancy over the laws.

E. J. 1000

1 - 6 -

F I N I S.